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ABSTRACT

This book is an attempt to bring a particular intellectual perspective to bear on the practical problems of administrating education--a perspective that eschews the purely technical, functionalist approach in favor of a critical and reflective consideration of educational practice in its political, social, and philosophical context. The first part of the book provides an overview of the issue of political legitimacy and the administration of education. Topics covered include the relationship between education and the state; the effect on the state of expanded conflicts in education; the relationship between privatized and public politics; critical election periods--a third level of politics; the effects of U.S. reform politics on education; the role of educational measurement; and the recent politicization of education. Following this discussion are four "readings" or essays by separate authors: "Emerging Conflicts in the Doctrines of Public Administration," by Herbert Kaufman; "Three Views of Change in Educational Politics," by Laurence Iannaccone; "Educational Governance: Contradictions and Tendencies," by Peter Cistone and Laurence Iannaccone; and "Education, Public Confidence, and the Legitimacy of the Modern State: Do We Have a Crisis?" by Hans N. Weiler. An 11-item annotated bibliography is included. (TE)

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ESA841 THEORY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Political Legitimacy and the Administration of Education

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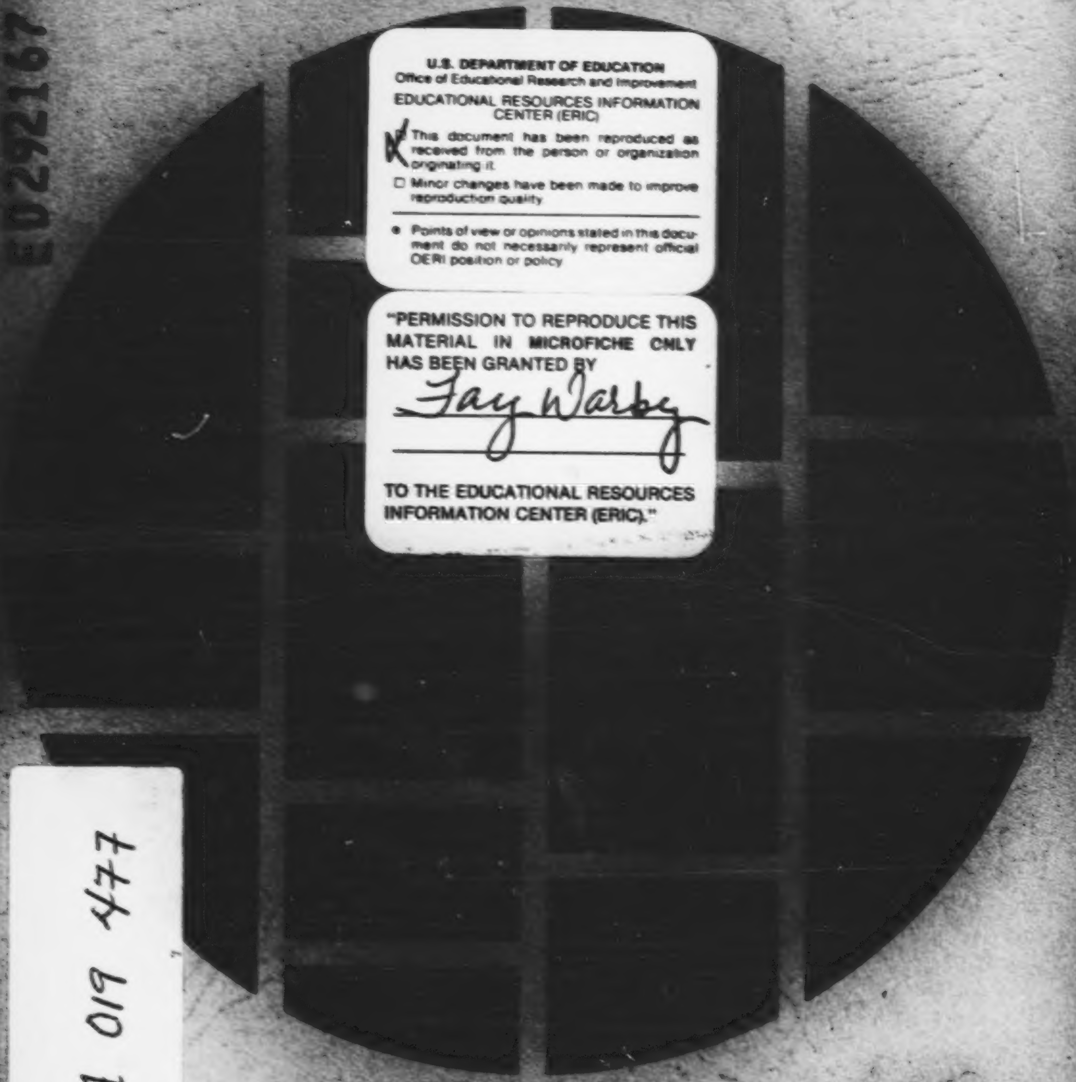

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Political legitimacy and the administration of education

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The course includes:
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Series Introduction

It is now widely recognised, among theorists and practitioners alike, that the traditions that have informed educational administration as a field of study for several decades are of only limited use in coming to terms with the complexity and value-laden nature of educational practice. The sudden politicisation of the context and conduct of education has raised issues of immediate import that cannot be dealt with adequately by functionalist analysis or behavioural science. The collapse of these theoretical traditions in educational administration has produced a vacuum into which a very haphazard collection of intellectual bric-a-brac has been sucked. As a result, both theorists and the practitioners who look to them for help in an increasingly disordered world are alike in their bewilderment. How can alternative formulations be developed? How can reliable and relevant analyses be made?

The series of books of which this volume is a part is an attempt to explore a variety of intellectual traditions that have, until now, been largely ignored or dismissed by educational administrators. Each of the books is an attempt to bring a particular intellectual perspective to bear on the practical problems of administering education. They are, therefore, diverse in their starting points and in their analysis. What they have in common, however, is a rejection of a purely technical, functionalist approach to educational administration, and a commitment to a critical and reflexive consideration of educational practice.

The ideas presented in the introductory essays are necessarily an encapsulation of arguments that have developed and are developing more fully elsewhere. In order to assist readers to participate in these developments, selected readings are attached to each paper, and an annotated bibliography of key works is provided. We hope that the publication of this series will encourage others to join a necessary exploration of alternative perspectives in educational administration. Such exploration is long overdue.

Course team chairman

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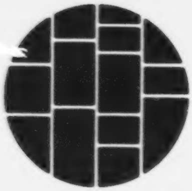
Political legitimacy and the administration of education



The relationship between education and the State

The division between educational governance and general national politics appears significantly less clear than it was only a decade or two ago. This may be seen across the globe, in Western democracies, in dictatorships of the Right, and in revolutionary governments of the Left. In some places, the division was never clear to begin with. However, with the development of this century's industrial State, modern Western governments tended to institutionalise organisational walls between education and the central political processes of representative government.

The relative autonomy of educational organisations in Western countries derived from the special status accorded educational governance in the public creed of the modern industrial State, beginning about 1900. Education was viewed as a unique public service, one that would provide for social and economic equality in the modern industrial State. It was therefore seen as an especially important case to which to apply a new twentieth-century philosophy of government. To wit: that public service is best rendered scientifically and objectively in special structures of governance by a professionally trained meritocracy of civil servants and administrators. Faith in an apolitical professionalism in public service generally and in State-supported schools specifically as the primary route to social equality was the basic element in the new twentieth-century public creed. It was argued that the schools could serve that function only by means of internal operations that would provide equal opportunities to students for learning, and reward them objectively for their achievements. Achievement would be limited only by differences in native ability and motivation. The ladder to the heavenly city of the turn-of-the-century reformers was an education system of State-supported schools that was free from political intrusion. These beliefs helped to separate educational governance from the public politics of representative government for much of this century. That separation has declined in recent years.

The institution of education, its organisations, and its governance are an expression of public authority, an apparatus of the State (Bidwell 1973). The granting, by public authorities, of a degree of autonomy to educational institutions does not make tax-supported schools independent of the State. Education's label of 'apolitical' describes its relationship to the general public politics of the State and its political parties, but the use of the label is far from a non-political usage. Instead, it identifies and reinforces in the public mind the appropriateness of the separation of such an institution or interest group from the central political conflicts of a democratic society. It suggests that such institutions are above politics, somehow more sacred and pure than matters settled by voters and their elected representatives. However, these characteristics do not make the educational system any less a part of the State. Indeed, that ideology is a distinctive feature of the public creed defining the modern State.

Consequently, when education is seen to fail, the State must do something about it or it will be charged with those failures. Similarly, if educational governance breaks down, part of the State apparatus is impaired. So, the intervention in educational governance by the nation's general politics is inevitable when public education appears incapable of delivering the promised equality of social mobility, or when its internal conflicts expand beyond the educational organisation's capacity to contain them. Education then becomes politicised — loses some of its apolitical character. Once the process of breaching the institutional walls — previously established to separate the internal politics of education from the general politics of the State — is well under way, additional educational issues are likely to become politicised. Education's legitimacy, its peculiar organisations, its internal politics, and its philosophy of governance and mission are all likely to be questioned. Education's claim to separate governance is further weakened.[1]

The effect on the State of expanded conflicts in education

The legitimation crisis of the State

The State pays a price for such expanded conflicts in education. Their extension into the general politics of the nation is likely to change them into self-renewing political conflicts, eventually calling the legitimacy of the State itself into question. What begin as attempts to compensate for a loss of confidence in public education contribute to a legitimation crisis of the State.

The pattern found in education is also found in other aspects of public policy and public service. The evidence of the last decade or two indicates that throughout the industrialised world we are experiencing a decline of confidence in public authority and in public institutions identified with the State. Students following Habermas's (1976) thesis on the legitimation crisis tend to explain this loss of confidence in terms of contradictions inherent in modern capitalism and its relation to the State. It is argued that modern capitalist democracies tend to face those inherent contradictions with the promise of reforms. These reform policies, through their associated political rhetoric, tend to raise expectations and to increase felt needs, which they subsequently cannot meet. So the public authority is further weakened. The State then seeks to resolve this dilemma through strategies that are intended to compensate for its loss of credibility.

The State uses three strategies of compensatory legitimation. Firstly, it increases markedly its use of legislation, administrative regulations, and, through expanding litigation, the involvement of the courts. Secondly, the modern State claims to provide impartial, objective, and scientific public services through grant programs produced by scientific planning, after experimentation and research. These are then followed by increased programs of accountability, evaluation, and expanded testing and measurement. Thirdly, many new and varied organisational units are created, expanding public participation in a widening range of advisory capacities. These strategies increase public expectations, which cannot be met (given the present socio-economic and political nature of advanced capitalist societies) resulting in even greater frustration and decreased confidence in public authority.

The same compensatory legitimation mechanisms of legalism, exaggerated claims of expertise, and fragmenting increased participation are used in educational governance. The results of these efforts have been an increase in public conflicts and controversies about education. This is an aspect of the decline in public confidence and the decline in the legitimacy of the State.

The results of reforms in education

The expansion of conflicts about education has tended to merge the politics and governance of both education and the State into a series of highly centralised political conflicts. The attempts to reform education in the United States illustrate these conflicts, as even a cursory inspection shows. From the mid-1950s onward, the national government of the United States mounted programs to reform American education. Within a decade, by the mid-1960s, change in education had been initiated by each of the three separate branches of American government: the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary. Also by the mid-1960s, the evidence of mounting educational controversies indicated that a new era in the politics of education in the United States was at hand (Iannaccone and Lutz 1970; Innaccone 1966, 1967). Similar efforts were under way in most States of the United States by the early 1970s. These reform attempts included programs or activities by the national and State governments to alter: the curriculum; teacher–pupil relationships; school organisational, governance, personnel, and program-planning functions; employer–employee relations; fiscal and budgetary aspects; accountability; pupil testing; and school and program evaluations. From the present vantage point, one can see these efforts have produced much less reform in classroom teaching–learning than they have changes in the organisation, administration, governance, and above all, in the politics of the schools (Silberman 1970; Mitchell and Iannaccone 1980; Wise 1979).

Among these many fragmented, often conflicting, changes, four major initiatives stand out. Firstly, there has been a rapid centralisation of the locus of policy making in education. Secondly, the use of research, experiments, and pilot projects to rationalise these reform policies, has severely undermined the public's confidence in the research and expertise of the social sciences. Thirdly, pervasive legalism has depersonalised the established social relations it sought to control. Fourthly, the reforms have fragmented the policy-making process through the creation of multiple symbolic participation structures. The net effect of these reforms has been to weaken markedly the capacity of the traditional American local school district to govern education, without providing an adequate substitute.

Centralisation with increased fragmentation, depersonalisation, and reduced local discretion combine to produce a condition akin to stasis — the immobilisation of government characteristic of Greek city-states immediately before they turned to government by tyrants. The present condition largely reflects the pursuit of a myth of hierarchical governance to its logical conclusion. However, the federal system was designed with multiple constitutional cleavages, precisely to prevent the development of such hierarchical government. Hence, a number of severe ideological and procedural contradictions are now apparent in the American educational system, especially in its policies and its policy-making processes.

Educational policy has become a dissonant mass of laws, executive pronouncements, bureaucratic regulations, administrative guidelines, and judicial decisions. This piebald patchwork of piecemeal policies legitimates antithetical ideological premises for the mobilisation of conflicting political interests. It also creates the structural arrangements of access to policy making required to wage political warfare effectively when the stakes are worth the struggle (Iannaccone 1981a). As a result, the politics of education in the decade ahead are likely to be even more turbulent than in the previous one. More important, we are also likely to see either a fundamental re-examination and redesign of the American educational policy system or a repeal of major aspects of recent school reforms. Quite possibly, both may happen.

To attribute the current loss of confidence in the State to education alone would be a mistake. On the other hand, to argue the converse would also be a mistake. Education has been viewed by people as a particularly crucial public service area of the modern State. Recent work in five Western democracies indicates that education continues to be one of the most salient issues for people. Consequently, Hans Weiler has argued that:

> The decline in public satisfaction with the schools may be one of the leading contributors to sustaining — and even to exacerbating — the general 'crisis of confidence' in the state (Weiler 1982, p. 13).

This merging of educational politics into the general politics of the State signifies the severe weakening of the public creed that justified their previous separation. For, as pointed out by Edith Mosher and Jennings Wagoner Jun., when 'profound questions are raised about the meaning and significance of widespread political controversies over education, then it is necessary to probe the ideological underpinnings of the whole system' (1978, p. ix).

Organisations and homeostasis

This monograph takes a different point of departure to examine these developments, particularly as they have taken place in the United States. Without denying the existence of some of the connections between advanced capitalism and expanding educational conflicts, it takes these connections to be a particular case of a longer standing and more fundamental relationship in politics. It argues that a universal tendency exists in all social groups and organisations to develop towards a condition of homeostasis, reducing internal fluctuations — especially as these might threaten their élites. At the same time, and, indeed, essential to this development, there is the tendency of organisations to protect themselves from external interference. This is attempted, often by sealing themselves off from potential influences around them, sometimes by seeking control of these. Tendencies toward internal stability and closedness are found in private organisations, governments, political parties, departments, and bureaus of modern industrial democracies and dictatorships; ancient Egypt's hierarchy; church organisations; preliterate tribes; Mandarin China; and sports.

This pair of tendencies predates not only capitalism, but Western society. The price paid by organisations for the combination is internal rigidity and external isolation. Together these spell a loss of capacity to adjust to changes in their environments and to meet the human needs of most of their members. On the other hand, with rare exceptions, the social universe in which a given organisation exists goes through changes of many sorts, including generational, demographic, and technological ones. A critical aspect of the rigidity and isolation of organisations that have been well established is the inability of their members to reconceptualise their conditions. Their established organisational ideologies dominate their thought and they repeat customary patterns of solutions even when new and different problems confront them. Hence the tendency of all governments and governmental agencies to press their policies and use their power beyond the zone of tolerance implied in their public mandate (Iannaccone 1967). The governing regime and its policies then suffer a legitimacy crisis. The crisis of the regime is an older form than the specific crisis of advanced capitalism. It is the arrogance of office recently reclothed in the civil service of hierarchical bureaucracies. Only when such regimes can stay in power without a significant revision of their governance ideologies does their legitimacy crisis become the crisis of the State. The replacement of their governing ideologies in American politics has been a recurring event in their life histories (Dahl 1961; Kammerer et al. 1962, 1963; Lowi 1964).

The relationship between privatised and public politics

Politics may be defined as the set of interactions that influence or shape the 'authoritative allocation of values or binding decisions and the actions implementing and related to them' (Easton 1965, p. 126). There are several assumptions in that general definition to do with scarcity, conflicts, authority, and levels of political conflict. The first assumption rests on the principle of scarcity. Every society and organisation has more demands from its members for both valued things and the establishment of their ideas as the value basis of future action than can be accommodated. Second, this condition implies the existence of some conflicts, and even more potential conflicts, over the establishment of value priorities. Third, beliefs and mechanisms that embody these are needed to limit and govern the conflicts over value allocations and resource distribution, so that at some point in almost all controversies people will accept and tolerate compromises rather than fight wars of attrition. The acceptance of decisions as binding conveys the sense of legitimacy and authority. The existence of governmental bodies and decision-making units believed by people to have the authority to guide conflicts carries with it a fourth implication.

Different sorts of political conflict exist. One has to do with the micro-level within organisations — of daily conflicts essentially private in nature. These result in the ongoing, internal organisational allocations. Another is concerned with the macro-level of conflicts in public politics. Still another involves conflicts about the mechanisms for dealing with such conflicts, the criteria used, and the procedures followed. The outcomes of conflicts in this third level, which are less frequent, have a shaping impact on the more frequent ones. They tend to alter the basic rules of the political games of micro-value and macro-value allocations. Thus the three levels of politics are closely interdependent and share a common ideological basis.

Since only a few of the many value and distribution conflicts of a society can command the central stage of political conflicts, the vast bulk of them are relegated to apolitical organisations and groups. The day in – day out organisational processes not only accomplish the work of the organisation, e.g. teaching–learning in the schools, but also simultaneously restrict, localise, suppress, and sometimes temporarily resolve social conflicts about the organisation's value allocations and distribution of resources and rewards. The term *apolitical* is generally used to *refer to organisations and social events in which conflicts are to a significant extent privatised conflicts*. Such organisations or events are set apart from the central political processes of the State.

In contrast to the privatised conflicts of apolitical organisations, *politics is the avowed conduct of public affairs*. It refers to *the management of conflicts about the allocation of value and distribution of resources*. In particular, it refers to the establishment and maintenance of rules and procedures by which such allocations are made. These include the explicit delegation or implicit relegation of some types of affairs (or their *suppression*) to the privatised conflict world of apolitical institutions. The obverse of that is the exploitation of other kinds of conflicts in the public politics of the State. In Schattschneider's view, 'the outcome of the game of politics depends on which of a multitude of possible conflicts gains the dominant position' (1960, p. 62). The central political conflict, in effect, 'overwhelms, subordinates and blots out a multitude of lesser ones' (Schattschneider 1960, p. 68). Therefore, says Schattschneider, of political strategy and tactics, 'all politics deals with the displacement of conflicts or efforts to resist the displacement of conflicts' (1960, p. 70).

The privatisation of public politics

All organisations were created through a series of value choices. In the case of special governmental institutions like education, these choices resulted from political conflicts in the central governmental bodies of the State at some time. The public memory of those conflicts may be buried in governmental archives and recounted dressed up as a tale of virtue triumphing over evil political scoundrels. The values that prevail both shape the organisations and institutions thus created and provide the assumptions that guide policy making in public affairs. In addition, they become the ideological bases for the organisation's privatised politics. They become the premises of their doctrines of governance and administration, the rationale for daily allocations and distributions of values and prized symbols and rewards. They supply the criterion base for accountability, evaluation, and measurement processes. In brief, they become the institution's ideological underpinnings.

Those in this century that justified education's separation from the general politics of the State simultaneously provided the apologia for its internal power relationships. Privatised conflicts confer special advantages to insiders, as against non-members, and to organisational élites, as against rank-and-file members. The separation of educational governance from its public ideology has characteristically produced privatisation of conflicts, thus reducing debate about educational philosophy and questions of ends to squabbles about means.

Almost all the day-to-day transactions that result in the allocation of values and the distribution of symbols and scarce resources go on in organisations commonly thought to be private and apolitical. These transactions follow traditional routines. They rest on precedents that reflect organisational doctrines and related administrative tenets. These in turn rest on old policy premises and a web of basic social, economic, and power assumptions about a specific organisation, organisations in general, and the society itself. Such basic beliefs are usually taken for granted; they are culturally defined axioms. They appear as obvious statements of fact rather than as political slogans that were once forged in the fire of political debate and conflict. At the same time these routinised processes maintain the decision-making pattern of the organisational governance.

Ironically, so powerful can such myths become over time that governmental agencies, public bureaucracies, and organisations that were created out of public controversies a generation ago or less, and that are legally subject to a ministry and wholely funded by taxes, may still come to occupy that apolitical category in the public mind. Finally, it should be noted that the two aspects of the myth of authority — the identification of the approved locus for political conflict resolution and the distinction between the political and the apolitical — are mutually dependent. They rest on the same configuration of belief and assumption that compose the society's political paradigm, guiding public policy in central bodies of government.

Even a loosely organised set of related assumptions can provide the premises to guide an organisation's policy making, as long as they have at least two characteristics: they must have had a significant consensus-building quality to be accepted by the society as authoritatively articulating that society's beliefs relevant to the organisation, and they must have become myth-like in character. Their history as political issues must be either forgotten or retold in such favourable light as to make them appear obvious and virtuous truths. Then they will have gradually become sedimented in the beliefs of the society, disappearing beneath the newer political battles. Their being accepted as the way things are and ought to be is then taken for granted. They are most powerful when they become unconscious bias, the value criterion automatically used by members of the society in making allocations of value and distributions of prized matters (Lindblom 1968).

In the process, they contain, restrict, localise, and fragment the conflicts about value allocation and distribution. Actually, many potential clashes among diverse interests never surface to require organisational decisions. Potential conflicts are suppressed. Other potentially large issues are broken up into many smaller questions. These become petty controversies scattered about the organisation, separated by hierarchical levels and fractionised into various differentiated subunits and specialities.

Traditionally, educational conflicts within apolitical educational governance organisations and schools have concentrated on petty, rather than large, issues; technical, rather than explicit, value questions; and have been highly personal rather than issue oriented. Once the process of depoliticisation is well under way, the handling of these smaller scattered conflicts is guided by the policy premises based on the hidden value assumptions that are the shared myth of the authority of apolitical public service institutions and of the State. *Depoliticisation* may be briefly defined as *the developmental process of subordinating political conflicts, by taking certain beliefs about social relations out of the gunfire of public criticism and debate, and either explicitly delegating, or implicitly relegating, them to apolitical organisations and institutions.*

The politicisation of privatised politics

The distinction held by a society between public affairs and apolitical matters is neither rooted in natural science nor fixed for all time. Instead, it is rooted in the beliefs of a people of a specific society in a given period. The culturally shared political paradigm of a society fixes that distinction for an era in its historical development. While it is not permanent, it may be the most powerful basis of politics. Under certain conditions, however, the political myth separating an apolitical institution from the society's political system will erode and give way. This erosion arises in part from the *nature of organisations* and in part from the *nature of the illusion* supplied by a predominant political myth.

A number of political theorists have argued that belief systems about the nature and proper work of government form the web that holds the political system together (Dahl 1961; Cobb and Elder 1972; Edleman 1970; Lindblom 1968; MacIver 1965). In fact, Italian political theorists at the turn of this century concluded that, at bottom, government is a complex of norms (Romano 1951). Central to that web is what has been called the myth of authority (MacIver 1965). It is central in at least two senses: it identifies the legitimate loci for the public allocation of values and distribution of resources, e.g. legislatures; and it identifies what sorts of conflicts should be considered public, and so become subjects for politics. At the same time it identifies those that should be thought of as apolitical: the private affairs of some classification of persons, organisations, or institutions.

The control of behaviour largely rests on the social contexts and ideologies of these same private and apolitical institutions. Their organisational and institutional socialisation processes produce and reinforce their members' beliefs, which shape their behaviour. The routines of organisational allocation, distribution, and socialisation processes restrict, localise, head off, and suppress the social conflicts about these organisational activities. Avoidance of conflicts and reduction of the scale, intensity, and scope of social conflicts is one typical consequence of organisation. The obverse of this is the legitimating and channelling of other conflicts. In fact, fostering some conflicts while suppressing others is a function of all organisations because of one simple fact. As E. E. Schattschneider taught, 'all forms of political organization have a bias in favor of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because *organization is the mobilization of bias*' (Schattschneider 1960, p. 71).

All organisations tend, over time, to maximise different value preferences from those of the general society. This tendency arises from two facts: firstly, the universal inclination of all social systems to move towards internal stability and the blocking of external changes noted earlier; and secondly, an organisation's initial founding bias, while *consistent* with the general social ideology, is not *identical* to it. The reason for their differentiation as an organisation of governance and as a service institution is their specialised function. It is the action for which they were mobilised. To a degree, then, they tend to start out ideologically different from, though not inconsistent with, the society that brought them into existence. Over time, however, that difference will increase. The greater their autonomy, the more privatised their conflicts; the more insulated they are from the general widespread controversies of their society, the greater the degree of divergence in value choices displayed by them in their decisions. That divergence cannot continue endlessly without provoking conflicts with the larger society. There is an implicit assumption that the use of an organisation's authority, whether granted to it *de jure* or *de facto*, will not overtly conflict with the predominant beliefs of the society, especially its central myth of authority. When it does, conflicts break out between the institution and other organisations, often other governmental organisations. Eventually these require the attention of organs of public authority. Then apolitical institutional politics tilt towards a transformation into, and merge with, the general politics of the State.

Essentially the same outcomes result from the internal disruption of educational governance. Increased rigidity resulting from the universal attempt to achieve internal stability reduces the institution's capacity to deal flexibly and variably with its employees and pupils. For example, in most industrialised societies, the period since World War II has generally been one of improved quality of teacher training. Increased professionalism produces demands by teachers for the discretionary latitude needed to exercise their enhanced knowledge and skills. The day when a school principal knew enough about each subject taught to base supervision of teachers on his or her acknowledged expertise has disappeared in most industrialised countries. The logical extension of administrative doctrines appropriate to the hierarchical mode of bureaucracy, however, tends to reduce teacher discretionary latitude. The resulting conflicts are carried, often by teacher unions, outside traditional educational institutions. In effect, they spill over the established channels of conflict management and pour into the waters of the State's general politics. The participants in such conflicts have — with or without deliberate thought — rejected the ideological strictures against 'washing their linen in public'. In fact, both the disruption of internal organisational controls and conflict suppression mechanisms, and the intervention of the State in educational governance were characteristic elements in the expanding conflicts of education of the last two decades.

Briefly defined, *politicisation is the developmental process of expanding conflicts that turns aspects of the apolitical realm of privatised conflicts into public affairs for debate and criticism.* It changes the rules and procedures that once defined such conflicts as the private, internal affairs of apolitical institutions.

Critical election periods: a third level of politics

The classification of politics

The existence of apolitical and political institutions to control privatised and public conflicts respectively implies yet a third sort of politics, one that results from the fact that the distinction between the two is subject to change. Implicit is a type of political conflict that periodically changes a society's conceptual schema for the classification of such matters. The early stages of such turning-point election periods see an expansion of conflicts. Some conflicts, traditionally considered apolitical, are politicised. Conversely, the last stages in the critical election years of politics witness the establishment of a new political paradigm. Its central feature is its ideology of authority. It also includes new classifications of some matters as apolitical and others as political. A new mandate of governance becomes increasingly accepted by larger numbers of voters, and conflicts are reduced. The conflicts through which an established political paradigm with its politico-economic assumptions are replaced or abruptly revised is that third level of politics. It redefines micro-levels and macro-levels for the next era. Schattschneider calls it the substitution of conflicts. He asserts that it '*is the most devastating kind of political strategy*' (1960, p. 74).

Institutions are never neutral with respect to all conflicts and issues, because 'all organisation is the mobilisation of bias'. A change in the basic issues debated, contested, and handled by a society's political institution requires either that the structure of these institutions be altered to better handle issues they were previously designed to displace, or that the new issues be displaced by ones compatible with the old established structures. 'The new conflict can become dominant if the old one is subordinated, or obscured, or forgotten, or loses its capacity to excite the contestants or becomes irrelevant' (Schattschneider 1960, p. 65). Hence, he argues, 'in politics the most catastrophic force in the world is *the power of irrelevance which transmutes one conflict into another and turns all existing alignments inside out*' (1960, p. 74).

As we have seen, most of the distributions of symbols, material rewards, prestige, influence, status, jobs, and the many other prizes valued by people go on within organisations and social groups without catching the attention of most of society. Those relatively few issues and distributions that engage the attention of a significant proportion of the society reflect the generation and expansion of conflicts. These sometimes continue to expand enough to find their way to centre stage, as it were, to public bodies designed to deal with such conflicts.

The politicisation of the apolitical

To gain such attention and keep it long enough to make a difference, new value issues and different distribution questions from those normally handled must overcome two hurdles. They must, like most political issues, invoke the contribution of time and energy of a rather large number of persons in organised activities to influence others. Much more difficult, they must overcome the inertia of culturally determined beliefs by which they have been previously defined as apolitical. Most often the exclusion of particular issues from public conflicts results from the fact that they are seen as controversies of previous eras, once settled and not to be reopened. Then they must change enough of the ideological basis of their previous classification, the paradigm of political assumptions that placed them outside legitimate political debate, to allow them to re-enter the realm of public affairs. In brief, they must lose their privatised character and acquire a public one in the minds of voters.

The capacity to develop new cleavages over new issues is a prime instrument of power. The coalition that is able to set the agenda for public debate is likely to take over the government. These are the trade marks of the most pivotal election of a critical election period, the realignment election. Such an election is one that goes beyond the defeat of the incumbent party:

> In essence critical realignment elections are very intense disruptions of traditional patterns of voting behavior. They quickly produce a sharp reorganization of the mass voter coalitional bases of the major parties . . . a redivision of the universe of voters along different lines (Iannaccone 1981, p. 57).

It is precisely this changed division of voters in the Reagan election of 1980 that distinguishes it as fundamentally different from the Nixon election of 1968, even though both were Republican Party victories. A new political paradigm fosters conflicts over new issues and suppresses the traditional conflicts over old issues at the same time as the categorisation of political and apolitical matters changes. Because 'all organisation is the mobilisation of bias', the establishment of a new set of issues for political conflicts is interdependent with a reorganisation of voting masses.

Briefly summarised, the propositions resulting from the studies of turning-point elections and national critical elections are: first, American electoral politics experience cyclical sequences of alternating phases of voter acquiescence and discontent. Second, major abrupt changes in their politics take place during their discontent phases. Third, these changes are cyclic adaptations of the polity's policies and service delivery, reflecting more accurately than before the changed social conditions of the policy and the particular governmental and service organisation involved. Fourth, the predominant political characteristic of the discontent phase are critical elections, focusing most dramatically in realignment elections, e.g. the national elections of 1932 and 1860. Fifth, critical election periods are preceded by a growing imbalance, or mismatch, between political and socio-economic systems. Sixth, critical election periods are also characterised by increased political conflicts around ideological issues. Seventh, such periods unleash driving forces of citizen involvement in political processes, whereas quiescent eras tend to restrain these. In all American politics, critical elections are cyclic, patterned over time — not random.

The policy-making process in eras of discontent retraces some of its previous policy developments. Critical election eras tend first to challenge the most recent aspects of policy and later to include the earlier policy precedents upon which the most recent policies relied for legitimacy and guidance. As earlier policies are engulfed in the expanding political conflicts of turning-point election periods, their remote policy premises and the predominant political paradigm of the polity become politically salient. Eventually, as politicisation of a general polity or the governance of a public service, e.g. education, continues to expand, the newer conflicts force awareness of some of the ideological underpinnings of previous critical election eras, redefining these as issues once more requiring decision, and not as settled fact. So the developmental and expanding history of critical election periods affects the character of policy making, disrupting its customary incrementalism to a signficant extent.

Critical election eras characteristically draw to a close with the articulation of, and voter support for, a new mandate. After this, the new policies, policy makers, and programs become increasingly more secure. Political conflict declines and a new era of voting quiescence emerges with its type of policy making. The characteristic policy-making process of the longer eras of voter quiescence has been aptly described as incrementalism (Lindblom 1968). It rests to a great degree on widely shared ideological assumptions about political, social, and economic organisations. Such ideological assumptions operate to take certain beliefs out of the battlegrounds of public criticism. They can then be introduced into policy making as facts and become the premises of futher policy making.

Over time, incremental policy making produces, as it were, a chain of links consisting of the accretion of a body of previous policies. Each successive policy move becomes the immediate precedent for the next and draws the gunfire criticism of public debate to itself. Thereby it automatically removes the political conflicts of the day one step further from the original ideological assumptions about philosophy of governance, authority, the criteria for distributions and value allocations, and the proper service functions of public authority. These have become safely sedimented as governance myths in the unconscious 'shoulds' and 'oughts' of the society. From these, for many years, they indirectly and powerfully define the proper issues for political conflict and the criteria for judging these, and separate the political from the apolitical.

The effects of American reform politics on education

The critical election periods that led to revolutionary changes in American educational governance and shaped its twentieth-century system fell between the early 1890s and the 1912 election of Woodrow Wilson. By 1920, the assumptive bases of governmental philosophy and administrative theory that were to anchor educational governance were solidily in place. The ideological slant that was to be its developmental bias for about a century was clear. The educational reforms were part of a larger political revolution known as the municipal reform movement (see Callahan 1962).

Since Jackson's day, early in the nineteenth century, the dominant political ideology had advanced the claims of representative democracy through wide participation in elections and office holding, e.g. advocating rotation in office and amateurism above tenure and professionalism. It had sought to balance the value claims of individual liberty and social equality with its widespread representative orientation and extended grass-roots electoral system. By the end of the century, rampant individualism and political manipulation characterised both the political order and education. The predominant political paradigm had lost its credibility under the attack of intellectuals (especially those of the media), academics, and leading school administrators (Callahan 1962; Tyack 1974). Specifically, the belief in direct elections, grass-roots decentralisation, and amateurism were challenged by the reform's values of 'merit' examinations, appointment and tenure in civil service, centralised hierarchical bureaucratic structures, and professionalism.

The paradigm of ideological assumptions resting on beliefs about representativeness in government had become sedimented in public memory through the first half of the 1800s. The expanded conflicts towards the end of that century had increasingly challenged these assumptions. The desertion by the intellectuals of the older ideology, the mounting conflicts of political and economic pluralism, and the threat of class war posed by the new ethnic political machines, embattled miners of the West, and the growing alliance of poor Southern and Midwestern farmers revealed the failure of the established paradigm. In effect, these forces had revealed that the old ideology with its myth of authority had not solved, and, more importantly, could not solve, the problems of social inequality by further extensions of its techniques. Instead, the development of the techniques of wider representativeness through direct election and rotation in office had produced a more irresponsible economic élite and greater political corruption. The technological developments now in place that were implied by the earlier myth of authority had effectively demythologised it by revealing the very contradictions it had purported to solve.

Political demythologising reduces the adequacy of a political paradigm, making it an inadequate illusion, when the technology implied by a paradigm's ideological assumptions is developed enough to test the validity of its promises. The issue is the perception of its future validity, not just its present performance. Every predominant political paradigm is an adequate illusion of the eventual resolution of irreconcilable or contradictory values strongly held. It successfully displaces conflicts around these contradictions.

The municipal reform movement

The turn-of-the-century critical election victories embodied in a single package a governmental, political, and administrative reform program. Structurally, it was a highly centralised hierarchical model of policy making and control akin to Weber's rational-bureaucratic model. Its procedures concentrated power in the organisational pyramid, walling off grass-roots participation. Its stated aims were equality, efficiency, and strong honest public service. After 1910, the means for accomplishing its aims were seen as managerial control by professional administrators (city managers, civil servants, and school superintendents) trained in Taylor's 'one best way' of scientific management (Callahan 1962). Frederick Taylor's scientific approach was an extreme case of naked empiricism. His goal was 'to discover the One Best Way to perform complex human operations . . . the dream of making social science really scientific' (Waldo 1963, p. 18; also see Callahan 1962; Tyack 1974). The machine model of human motivation and behaviour, the brass-instrument era of psychology, and logical positivism had become the core ideology of a political paradigm. It has been the predominant myth of authority for most of this century. The essence of the political aspects of the ideology of the culture of professionalism is its faith in its definition of science as value-free and politically neutral. So, its judgements about social problems and its solutions for these ought not to be interfered with by political conflicts. It follows that such solutions are best undertaken by apolitical institutions and organisations designed to deal with social services scientifically and that these be administered by professionals trained in scientific management.

The political victory of the reform was a rejection of the nineteenth-century conceptualisation of a democratic, decentralised federal government with diffused power and wide grass-roots voter participation. The elected representational aspect of the model was a small local school board similar in size and function to the industrial corporation board, elected at-large, rather than from specific neighbourhoods, and in non-partisan elections, to eliminate the role of the political parties. This election system insures the election of socially visible, upper-middle-class professional and managerial candidates and the defeat of the poor and working-class candidates (Iannaccone 1967). This was precisely what was intended by its most influential advocates in school administration (Cubberley 1916, pp. 92–93; Iannaccone 1981a). Both non-partisan and one-party election systems tend to reduce participation. Schattschneider says:

> One-party systems . . . have been notoriously useful instruments for the limitation of conflict and depression of political participation. This tends to be equally true of measures designed to set up non-partisan government or measures designed to take important public business out of politics altogether (Schattschneider 1960, p. 12).

The percentage of American citizens voting, even in national elections, declined after the critical election of 1896 (Schattschneider 1960). The reform's model of government, shaped to reflect the corporate governance of private industrial organisations at the turn of the century, affected public governance less than, but in the same direction as, stockholder elections in private corporations.

The spread of political conflicts engulfing education in the 1960s appears analogous to those of the 1840s and 1890s. As Callahan and Katz both point out, they brought basic issues to the surface for debate (Callahan 1975; Katz 1971). For example, Katz notes the re-emergence to public saliency of controversies among scholars over issues of heredity and environment in each of these decades. The recent re-emergence of a form of J. S. Mills's libertarian position on tax support for private schools, resting on libertarian propositions about the nature of politico-economic organisations, in the policy debates over vouchers or other programs to support private schools similarly bring to the surface for public appraisal another basic issue of educational governance. But much more compelling, I believe, is the fact that especially in both the 1890s, the beginning of our present mass industrial economies, and the 1960s, the beginning of our post-industrial era, the problems that catalysed educational politicisation across the globe are those of the larger cities. Further, in each of those decades, these problems are ones of social inequality and injustice that extend far beyond the competency of purely educational solutions because they are embedded in the social order. These facts are part of what led me to conclude that we are experiencing a revolution in the politics of education that may yet lead to a revolution in educational governance also.

Persistent mounting political conflicts move closer to focusing upon basic tensions at the heart of education and its relation to the political order. One example of such issues is the tension between the public belief in equal education for every child and the private concern of most families to assure the best education for their own children. Since a minority of society exists with distinct economic and political advantages, this tension becomes a controversy over élite and egalitarian goals for schools. The educational institution seeks to encompass simultaneously the demands of the State and the needs of students. In attempting this, it displays basic and fundamentally unresolvable contradictions between the impersonality of legislation and the personal idiosyncratic nature of teaching and learning. In turn, this influences the equally unresolvable and long-standing tension between teachers and administrators. The question of how much power professionals should have compared with that of lay citizens in relation to teaching, curricular values, and educational policy-making is similarly unanswerable in any ultimate sense. Lay citizens, parents, potential employers, and socio-economic élites have not only different, but contradictory, interests in education. These enduring issues and contradictions are aspects of the most basic struggle at the heart of government. The powder keg of all societies is the struggle between the few who rule and the many who are ruled. In any society, the pursuit of this struggle to its logical end would destroy the political order.

Schattschneider (1960) points out that people avoid political wars of attrition: 'some controversies must be subordinated by both parties because neither side could survive the ensuing struggle' (p. 76). This is consistent with his view on what leads to people supporting government even though it often provides less than people wish. They value government not because it is omnipotent, but 'because the world is a dangerous place in which to live' (p. 124). Preferable to wars of attrition are the consequences of the political discontent driving the spreading conflicts of critical election years: the replacement of a previously dominant political paradigm and its myth of authority with another, one better suited to the socio-economic realities of the day. The irreconcilable issues that were central to the politics of discontent introducing each critical election era are displaced through this process. New conflicts take centre stage. The more fundamental issues are, in effect, pushed off-stage out of the general politics of the State, and less basic ones become the divisions between active political coalitions.

The substitution of conflicts — education becomes apolitical

One remarkable achievement of the reform was the substitution of conflicts. New conflicts about proposed reform solutions replaced old conflicts over fundamental social issues. The basic issues were subordinated and driven off the political stage through the sharp separation of apolitical educational governance from the political-party mainstream of the political order. The separation of the politics of education from broader politics was seen as necessary for order, efficiency, and effective control of the delivery of educational services. The public belief in the apolitical nature of education is held tenaciously even now by many school people and others in spite of the rapidly increasing politicisation of education and the centralisation of educational policy-making in central bodies of elected representatives. The reform argued that there was a unitary community of citywide interests: a proper city manifests no social or economic cleavages, at least none should be allowed to surface politically — it threatens the tranquility of the idealised unitary community. All special interests should, according to this teaching, be subordinated to a community non-political-party interest. However, the organised pressure system is upper class, although the reform's educational mandate was to implement an élite education system for all. The needs and values of social classes and ethnic neighbourhoods that were different from the dominant ones were ignored or considered special and hence contrary to good education. Finally, the reform's apologia for power turned upon its belief in science, eventually redefined as logical positivism.

The new paradigm's definition of education as apolitical led to the shunting of other matters to the privatised control of conflicts within the world of education. These included: issues of the curriculum; teaching–learning techniques; supervision; sorting of pupils to tracks, classes, and teachers; working conditions; and teachers' relations with parents. As educational institutions grew more hierarchical, they became more centralised. Each of their levels became additional steps in handling complaints by parents, pupils, and teachers before these complaints could be legitimately brought to public attention. The institution's apolitical nature included a complex maze of judicial functions buffering the internal privatised handling of conflicts. The flow of policy down the hierarchical levels for implementation belied the explicit promise of efficient control: intra-organisational conflicts about interpretation at each level often meant policies were reversed by the time they came to be implemented.

Basic educational issues relating to race, religion, ethnicity, poverty, and the rights of pupils and parents were neither handled as public affairs for political debate nor addressed directly by the privatised conflicts within the institution. These had been effectively set apart from both realms by the new political paradigm's promise of equal access to education and equal opportunity for social mobility through education. The new paradigm and its promise of equality through bureaucratic centralisation, value-free scientific management, and efficiency provided an adequate illusion of a solution to replace the potential war of attrition threatened by the political conflicts of the late nineteenth century.

An adequate illusion is the capacity of a dominant political ideology to conceal fundamental irreconcilable contradictions in a society's core values by offering a hope of their reconciliation through the logical development of that ideology's implied techniques.

In their 1890 battles against elected neighbourhood school boards, the school administrators had appealed to the social Darwinism of Herbert

Spencer (Callahan 1967). The emergence on the political stage, in 1910, of Taylor's scientific management — in fact, naive naked empiricism — provided the illusion of a solution to 'the dream of making social science really scientific' (Waldo 1963, p. 18). The elements of efficiency, tax savings, and scientific management supported the rationale claimed by school administrators of neutral competence, value-free, objective, and impersonal professional governance of an apolitical educational institution separated from the general public political conflicts. The new apolitical doctrine of the twentieth-century industrial State is power theory, the apologia for a ruling class defined not so much by birth and breeding as by the newer culture of professionalism. The reform's doctrine is a complete apologia for the power of the strong bureaucratic State at every level with presumed scientific measurement as its essential characteristic. 'In essence', said Waldo, 'this new theory or philosophy of government was a reinterpretation of the meaning of democracy . . . It sought to attain the values of equality and freedom for citizens by making government strong and efficient' (1963, pp. 19–20). Its key elements were scientific management, training, the hierarchical control structure of bureaucracy, and merit guaranteed by faith in value-free measurement.

The role of educational measurement

Scientific management

Value-free, objective measurement is the key element in the industrial State's creed of apolitical educational governance. Without it, the entire structure is defenceless. Educational measurement is the glue providing internal social solidarity to professional education's hierarchy of governance and student control, and it supplies the shield against lay citizens. It is the reform's operational definition of the unitary community, the education organisation's hierarchy of supervision, and its social justficiation as an institution of meritorious equality of opportunity. The functional political alliance between measurement science and educational administration as scientific management is not only obvious on the face of it, but historically documented. In the words of Ellwood P. Cubberly, probably the most influential leader in educational administration in the first quarter of this century:

> For the superintendent, standardized tests have meant nothing less than the ultimate changing of school administration from guess work to scientific accuracy. The mere personal opinion of school board members and the lay public, and even the old method of a comparison of school systems, have been in large part eliminated, and in their place has been substituted demonstrable proof as to the validity of a method or a procedure or the effectiveness of the administration or the supervision of a school system . . . The development of standardized tests has meant a vast improvement in our ability to evaluate educational procedures, and as great an advance toward scientific organization as did the introduction of the conception of an orderly psychological development in the [eighteen] sixties (Cubberley 1947, p. 698).

Not accidentally, Cubberley also taught the doctrine of the unitary, apolitical community of educational governance as a government of the successful ones, the business classes, who like strong and good government (Cubberley 1916, pp. 93–4). The reform substituted accountants' techniques for philosophical discussion in educational administration. As Cubberley put it, 'there is no more need for speeches or oratory in the conduct of a school system than there would be in the conduct of a bank' (Cubberley 1916, p. 93). So much for public debate about basic issues in the education of a democratic society! The reform won a conflict of conflicts. For some fifty years thereafter, political conflicts about basic issues were displaced by privatised conflicts within education's apolitical institutions; public conflicts were largely about techniques (e.g. teaching and supervision techniques), and technical questions about measurement of pupil achievement, curriculum evaluation, and supervisory evaluation played a significant part in these.

Administrative doctrines — especially faith in the trinity of an apolitical public service, a unitary community, and scientific management — supplied the equivalent of a ruling-class apologia for the industrial State. Efficiency became its watchword for the crucial means and techniques toward its avowed end: equal opportunity. Bureaucracy was the chief structure of control for that ruling élite and the applications of efficiency within the administrative State and its educational apparatus. The essential tool of practice at the heart of each of these ideological assumptions is scientific measurement. Achieving the values of each of the other elements in this paradigm requires a public belief in the existence of scientific, objective, and value-free tools of measurement that will be used impartially by politically neutral, scientifically trained professionals. When the objectivity of that crucial instrument becomes the subject of widespread political controversy, the entire ideology moves toward a paradigm shift. Thus, the problems facing measurement professionals today are primarily political in nature, rather than technical. The politicisation of educational measurement is a significant subset of the larger politicisation of education and the legitimation crisis of the State. It reaches far beyond the charge that the State is failing in its recent reform promises; it challenges the fairness of its basic systems of distributive justice. Political theorists as far back in history as Aristotle have known that the loss of citizen faith in a polity's distributed justice is a necessary, though not sufficient, cause of revolution.

The politicisation of educational measurement

In recent political debates about accountability and evaluation, we are seeing another phase in the expanded political conflicts about education: the politicisation of educational measurement. These conflicts too are expanding. The evidence at hand suggests that the expansion of political conflicts about measurement may be an important characteristic of the politicisation of education through the rest of the 1980s. Such politicisation tends to reveal latent functions of previous apolitical operations and institutions. They are lifted out of the murky swamp of privatised conflicts and the institutional control of these onto the observable stage of politics controllable by the voter spectators who are much less easily managed. The manifestation of previously latent functions opens the door to them becoming the next subjects of political controversy.

Scientific work and discussions about tests and measurements among experts for much of this century tended to focus on technical aspects of improving instruments for measuring intelligence, academic achievement, and general or specialised knowledge. This work has generally attended much more to issues of test reliability than validity. The attention that has been given to validity has usually concentrated on narrow aspects of this, appropriate to an accepted test, rather than addressing the larger philosophical issues of the social sorting function of tests in controlling the allocation of status and power within society. The currency of terms such as accountability, cost effectiveness, school program, personnel evaluation, and the evaluation of State programs indicate this narrow perspective. The propriety of the social function of educational measurement — categorising and sorting people — was generally taken for granted through most of this century. This use of educational measurement goes directly to the heart of its socio-political significance.

Just as 'organisation is the mobilisation of bias', so too is measurement. All evaluation is the process of categorising and ranking according to some criterion bias. Research on measurement techniques to free measures of bias (ethnic, class, and cultural) has demonstrated that the task is hopeless. No such test or measurement is possible without a value-free communication. So long as language and communication among human beings pay tribute to ethnicity, class, and culture, there can be no culture-free tests. The issue is not whether there shall be bias in tests, but *what* bias shall be included and the social functions of that bias. An apolitical view of tests and measurement must ignore this. And that artificial blindness is a political choice.

The quest for culture-free tests in the 1950s and 1960s was an indicator of the current position of the political life cycle of the predominant political paradigm in educational governance that made measurement its queen science. First, it indicates dissatisfaction with the traditional ethnic, class, and cultural biases of educational measurement. Second, it reveals the reemergence of a concern for, and legitimation of, a significant degree of cultural pluralism previously rejected by the philosophy of the administrative State and its education institution. Third, it reveals the weakening of the ideological base of the predominant paradigm — its capacity to continue to be an adequate illusion displacing irreconcilable conflicting interests. Fourth, it teaches a theoretical lesson. The mature development of the technology implicit in the predominant paradigm reveals a fundamental contradiction between the paradigm's social promise of equal opportunity through education and the primary instruments to assure that outcome — objective measurement within scientifically managed bureaucracies. The search for pluralistic measurement is an emerging technical venture in search of its ideological base, which is also an emerging, but hardly well-established, element in a possible future political paradigm. It is as yet inadequately articulated, let alone established. A new, reconstructed, or revised statement of the democratic dream in ideological terms with political potency is the necessary prior condition for this measurement's development.

The crucial part played by measurement, and faith in measurement, warrants specific attention to its traditional roles in State education as well as its recent and growing politicisation. Virtually all sorts of educational measurement decisions have for most of this century been automatically classifed as apolitical by the lay public and professionals alike. So until recently, the latent political aspects of the social functions of educational measurement were largely ignored or taken for granted. Two of these latent political functions are: one, internal control functions of the school; and two, measurement's instrumental significance in sorting students' life statuses.

Latent social and political functions of measurement

One of the least well-studied functions of educational measurement is that of internal governance. Teacher-made tests and the use and misuse of standardised tests and other measures in the normal course of allocating grades to students and controlling students is a pervasive daily aspect of educational governance. The 'apolitical' activities of grading and making a grade are largely intra-organisational and micro-political.

One of the more important social functions of standard measurement is to provide the seemingly scientific rationale to support and protect education professionals in their handling of pupils. The mix of professional and bureaucratic elements in the complex organisational amalgam we call the school necessitates two sorts of protection. These are the use of a standard procedure and the defensibility of bureaucratic behaviour. Each of these lays claim to being impersonal and objective, and tends toward depersonalising education. The bureaucratic function of tests — providing a rationale for judgements about people, which are at best subjective and difficult to make — should neither be deplored nor passed over lightly. It is essential for pupil control. It constitutes a defensible response to potential challenges about the placement of pupils with given teachers or in particular programs, and the allocation of, or withholding of, additional education to specific individual students at various levels, including the tertiary level.

Publishers of tests, the experts on measurement and sometimes the entrepreneurs in evaluation, often take the position that teachers misuse standardised tests to discipline students and control their behaviour rather than use them as the test researchers intended. To consider teachers as lacking in intelligence and in measurement training indicates a lack of understanding of the needs of classroom teachers and school administrators. The simple fact is that grades and test scores are necessary devices for essential aspects of the present educational institution: they justify the allocation of intra-organisational status rankings to pupils. Since these rankings are perceived by parents and others as predictors of a child's life chances, they influence the handling of children in conformity to the interpretation of school grades. Teacher grades become a signal system to call parental pressure onto students to make their behaviour conform to the school's bureaucratic patterns. Pupils learn to short-circuit the longer signal loop before parental intervention and to conform directly to teacher evaluative behaviour. The concern of measurement experts over, as they perceive it, the misuse of standardised tests ignores the disciplinary control functions of grades and making the grade.

Similarly, teachers often prefer their own tests to scientifically produced ones. This is not an indication of teacher stupidity, or of poor training. It reflects the reality of the teacher's work world more accurately than does the use of scientific standardised tests. It is precisely the looseness in teacher-made tests that allows teachers flexibility in allocating grades subjectively to control pupils without realising it fully themselves. Teachers prefer their own tests to standardised tests because the results of their own tests better fit their subjective judgement. So a long-standing source of tension between professional groups within education has for several years produced expanding political conflicts, with measurement experts and test-publishing companies on one side and teachers and school administrators, the primary users, on the other. These political conflicts are only part of the increased politicisation of educational measurement.

The remedy first turned to by measurement experts was that of better communication to the users trying to understand their criticisms. This remedy is dangerous under present conditions: it is the next-to-final defence of established élites on the eve of revolution. Its intentions are noble, but it ignores the dilemma of the users, who have been experiencing expanded conflicts and the erosion of their credibility. This erosion does not primarily reflect lack of understanding of measurement. It reflects, instead, what the public is coming to see all too clearly because of the technical successes of measurement. The source of the problems confronting teachers and administrators is the loss of public faith in the reform's political ideology underpinning measurement sciences too. The society believed the apologia of an educational institution that would eventually be scientifically objective, only discriminating according to merit. The educational practitioners increasingly find themselves operating in a bureaucratic structure that requires that objectivity. At the same time, the researchers, scholars, and measurement scientists have made it clear that no such thing as value-free objectivity exists. Improved communication will only increase the general public's awareness of the contradiction between the test's scientific end, i.e. no greater objectivity is realistically possible, and the practitioner's need, i.e. subjective, even capricious, judgement in the exercise of power to control the classroom population within an organisational structure designed for autocratic power relations. Increased public awareness of this contradiction will further erode the credibility of the myth of authority that is central to today's educational governance.

Conflicts about the social bias of standardised tests expanded from the mid-1960s. The search for tests that would not favour the economically and politically dominant White Anglo-Saxon Protestant upper-classes failed. The adjustment from norm-referenced to criterion-referenced tests may provide for a very limited increased flexibility for the latter. It cannot, however, escape the need for some norming population at the test-item levels without sacrificing reliability. The make-up of that test population closes once more the circle against the dream of culture-free, value-free, purely meritorious measurement.

None of these technical solutions (i.e. neither decreasing measurement error, nor culture-free test construction, nor criterion-referencing of tests) can work to eliminate the composite social-class, ethnic, religious, and racial bias of the present educational institution. Because 'all organisation is the mobilisation of bias', some bias will be inherent in the institution. The question of which bias should predominate is not a technical matter to be solved by giving all power to apolitical technicians. It is the public's affair, and public affairs are not apolitical — on the contrary, they are intensely political.

The recent politicisation of education

Research on the politics of education during the last twenty years indicates that the recent conflicts over education are akin to those of the critical election era of 1890–1912 when this century's predominant philosophy of American government and politics was forged:

> For the second time within a century we are experiencing a revolution in the politics of education . . . The first of these revolutions . . . restructured American educational government as municipal reform took control of urban school systems away from city political machines and their neighborhood subunits. The second, which has been developing for some two decades, displays a similar propensity and potential for transforming the structures of educational government again (Iannaccone 1977, p. 269).

The recent increase of conflicts about measurement in education are an expansion of those that have been increasing the politicisation of education in America since the mid-1950s. Three dramatic events between 1954 and 1960 were critical points of departure creating a new politics of education leading up to the recent politicisation of measurement. These were the United States' Supreme Court decision of 1954, Sputnik in 1957, and the New York City teachers' strike of 1960. These led to the extension of the predominant doctrines to their logical ends; the extension of education's myth of governance to its logical extremes revealed the contradictions inherent in it.

The 1954 Supreme Court decision that racially separate schools are inherently unequal carried the unitary community tenet to its inevitable conclusion. The expanded political conflicts following the decision have revealed that supporters of that doctrine as long as its application established White Anglo-Saxon Protestant hegemony violently opposed its extension to desegregation. The resulting ideological inconsistency, or cognitive dissonance, is likely to either reverse the process of integration or produce a new cognitive frame of reference. Either consequence can only come about through severe political clashes, which would destroy or markedly revise one of the crucial doctrines of the administrative State.

The impact of Sputnik on American politics and educational policies increased centralisation of curriculum development and decreased curricular variation. It placed the institution under increased stress to standardise all schools towards élite academic goals. Modern American testing programs in education owe much of their development to the public controversies following Sputnik. The combined attacks on education as unfair to racial minorities and the poor, and as also lacking in academic quality, cast grave doubt on the institution's capacity to fulfil the reform promise of greater social equality through equal educational opportunity. In fact, these conflicts raised public awareness of the distinct possibility that the present schools are not appropriately designed to accomplish that goal.

Teacher unionisation and militancy following the 1960 strike challenged directly the ideological assumption of the legitimacy of school administrations. Organised teachers claimed for themselves the legitimacy of the reform's myth of professional neutral competency, arguing that their scientifically trained technical expertise is more relevant to pupil achievement than is the administrator's scientific management. Elaborations, extensions, and new applications of the basic assumptions of the old reform myth appear in the rhetoric of expanded political conflicts through the 1960s and 1970s. Regardless of how these are ultimately resolved, their very existence demonstrates that the ideological underpinnings of educational governance are no longer submerged beneath the level of public consciousness. They have come to be partly demythologised.

Given the interdependence of organisational ideology and structure in its bias, the renewed controversial condition of the first is mutually dependent upon a destablisation of the second. The previously unified structures of State educational government have been grievously upset and fragmented by a cleavage within education, between the school administrative élite and organised teachers. A second cleavage around which expanding conflicts emerge more and more is that between the States and the national government over education policies and control, especially resulting from national intervention programs. Increased conflicts between the States and their local school districts are also under way. The political conflicts about the system of educational governance in States cannot extend to their necessary conclusions for resolution without calling up for public debate fundamental assumptions about the institution's bureaucratic form and the role of measurement in that.

Once upon a time, we are told, there was an apolitical world of institutionalised education in which the protective shields of boards, administrators, and other policy groups guided by scientific measurement experts stood between the public and the classroom teachers. Number-crunching techniques and models produced data glued together by the hegemony of the logical-positivist ideology of the administrative State and repaired the wall between politics and educational apolitical governance. That wall is much weaker today than ever before in this century. Its previous builders and repairers are no longer able to maintain it effectively. It remains to be seen whether the heirs to that function — teacher organisations pruned of administrators and national party-politicians equipped with intervention programs — can fill the political vacuum produced by the erosion of the myth that political centralisation and militancy helped to demythologise. Filling that vacuum requires nothing less than an answer that the voting public will believe to the question, 'Where, how, and by what public creed is the public interest in education to be found, articulated, and registered into a new mandate for educational governance?'.

Notes

1 Research data about abrupt and significant educational policy redirections and the heightened political stress surrounding these come from studies of education polities in the United States. The earliest research on American local school districts resting on its theory of political change in education followed the work of Mosca, the Italian political theorist of the nineteenth century, and his school (see Iannaccone 1967; Iannaccone and Lutz 1970). Only later in the 1970s was the connection made between this body of research on educational governance and the work of American political theorists (Burnham 1970; Key 1955; MacRae and Meldrum 1960; Schattschneider 1960). Therefore, the student interested primarily in Australian educational politics is advised to be cautious about automatic transference of specific details from American educational politics to Australia; it may be equally careless not to note where similarities exist in the dynamic political processes related to shifts in political paradigms about education.

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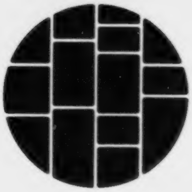
Readings



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Emerging conflicts in the doctrines of public administration

Herbert Kaufman

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As a self-conscious discipline among the cluster of specialties or "fields" encompassed by political science, public administration came late and grew fast.[1] Its recent arrival and rapid growth sometimes obscure the fact that its origins are to be found in a process of experimentation with governmental structure that long preceded the appearance of public administration as a subject of systematic study and is likely to continue as long as the nation exists. This process of experimentation goes on vigorously today, and the development of new forms is generating discord more profound and far-reaching than any that has ever hitherto divided students of public administration. It is with the sources and significance of that discord that this paper is concerned.

I. THREE CORE VALUES

The central thesis of this paper is that an examination of the administrative institutions of this country suggests that they have been organized and operated in pursuit successively of three values, here designated representativeness, neutral competence, and executive leadership. Each of these values has been dominant (but not to the point of total suppression of the others) in different periods of our history; the shift from one to another generally appears to have occurred as a consequence of the difficulties encountered in the period preceding the change.[2] Much of the early literature commonly identified as within the province of public administration was written during the transition from the first to the second of these values, and the great flood of materials produced after World War I often reflected both the second and third values when these for a time (and for reasons to be explained) pointed in the same direction for governmental improvement. Lately, however, the courses of action indicated by the second and third values have been not only different, but contradictory; the cleavage is becoming increasingly apparent in the doctrines of public administration. What the effects will be on the fraternity of practitioners and on their aspirations to professional status is difficult to say, but it seems clear that commitments to values that have become incompatible can produce only gulfs in the realm of ideas and confusion in proposals for governmental reform.

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[1] "Although the art of administration has been practiced for centuries, it has not been widely written about until recent times . . . . The study of public administration has advanced to an extraordinary degree since 1920 . . . . (T)he study of public administration is still primarily American." Leonard D. White, *Introduction to the Study of Public Administration*, 4th edition (New York, 1955), pp. 9, 10, 11.

[2] To be sure, the three values, which will be examined in turn, are not the only ones to be fulfilled by the governmental system, but the design and functioning of the government have been such that these appear to have received prime stress in the ordering of our political life.

The Quest for Representativeness. The earliest[3] stress was placed on representativeness in government, the quest for which clearly had its roots in the colonial period, when colonial assemblies were struggling with royal governors for control of political life in the New World and "No taxation without representation" was a slogan that expressed one of the principal interests and anxieties of the colonists. The legislatures thus became the champions of the indigenous population, or at least of the ruling elements in the colonies, against what was regarded in many quarters as executive oppression. When the Revolution drove the British out, the legislatures in the new states were, with but a couple of exceptions,[4] enthroned in positions of leadership of the new governments, and, although the franchise continued to be limited to a relatively small proportion of the people, it was through the legislatures that governmental policy was formulated and legitimated. Even in the states that continued to operate under their colonial charters in the post-Revolutionary years, the governors were reduced to figureheads with little influence in the making of governmental decisions. In ten of the states, the governors were elected by the legislatures, most of them for only one-year terms; in just one state did the governor have a veto, and even that was limited by present-day standards. Governors had few powers of appointment and removal, or of administrative supervision and control. They did not function as legislative leaders. Lacking in status and in constitutional and administrative strength, governors had no source of political strength, and they therefore remained subordinate to the legislatures in every respect; they had no leverage with which to exert influence even if they had been so inclined. Hence, the office was regarded as primarily ceremonial and a symbol of honor rather than as a seat of power, and it therefore rarely attracted men of distinction in the early days of the Republic. Consequently, as late as the opening years of the Twentieth Century, the governorship was a dead-end road. As one authority has remarked, they served their short terms and returned to private life with few accomplishments behind them and nothing before them but the pleasure of being called "Governor" for the rest of their days.[5] The legislatures ruled virtually unchallenged.

[3] It is impossible to date any of the periods with precision, except arbitrarily, and it is probably unnecessary to do so for most purposes, but their origins can be identified, and so, roughly, can their zeniths.

[4] New York and Massachusetts. These states provided important models for the federal executive, which ultimately was set up as an even stronger—and perhaps better—office than its prototypes.

[5] There were notable exceptions of course. Cleveland became President after serving as Governor of New York, Hayes and McKinley had both been Governors of Ohio before moving to the White House, and other governors became influential in national politics. As a general rule, however, the governorship was not a springboard to power or prominence.

In local government, too, collegiate bodies were in charge. Whether they were truly "representative," and whether one ought to refer to the governing organ of a community that is not "sovereign" as a legislature, are questions we need not consider here. Suffice it to say that local executives labored under the same or perhaps greater handicaps than their state counterparts and therefore presented no more of a challenge to the local institutions corresponding to legislatures than did the governors to the state bodies.

The constitutional specifications for the Presidency constituted a countertrend to the apparent value system of governmental designers in early America. For the President was invested with greater authority than almost any other chief executive of the time. Yet even at the federal level, there were clearly widespread expectations that the Congress would provide the primary motive power for the government, a view shared, according to Binkley, even by many incumbents of the White House whose "Whig conception" of the Presidency as subservient to the legislature may be contrasted with the "stewardship theory" of independent Presidential authority to be enunciated much later in history. While Washington and Jefferson fought to protect and extend executive power from the very first, it is probably not stretching the facts to argue that Presidents for a long time had an uphill struggle in this effort, and that many chose to yield to the sentiment of the day and the strength of the giants in Congress. Whether or not the legislatures were actually the most representative institutions need not be explored here; there is ample evidence that they were thought to be so.

The enthronement of the legislature was one of the two major tangible indications of the value placed on representativeness; the other was the rather uncritical faith in the electoral principle. It began with the extension of the franchise and a thrust toward universal adult suffrage. But the faith in elections also took the form of an increasing number of official positions filled by balloting. The first half of the Nineteenth Century saw the number of elective offices sharply increased, especially after the Jacksonian Revolution burst upon the country. The ballot grew in length until almost every public official from President down to dogcatcher came to power via the electoral route. Moreover, with the rise of the party organizations to new influence as a result, even those positions which were not made elective were filled by party faithful; the spoils system came into its own. By the time of the Civil War, voters found themselves confronted by hundreds of names on their ballots, and each change of party brought with it a change in virtually all government employees.

The Quest for Neutral Competence. As early as the middle of the Nineteenth Century, it had become clear to some people that legislative supremacy, the long ballot, and the spoils system did not in fact increase representativeness; as a matter of fact, they often seemed to have just the opposite effect. For one thing, they tended to confuse both voters and interest groups and thereby opened the way to power to political bosses who, while providing a measure of integration in the bewildering pullulation of government, often utilized their positions to advance their personal interests and the interests of the organizations they headed without regard for the interests of many of the governed. For another thing, legislators and administrators at every level of government proved themselves peculiarly vulnerable to the forces let loose by the burgeoning industrial system; corruption beset legislatures from county boards and city councils right up to Congress itself, and the venality and incompetence of many public officers and employers were common knowledge.

Disillusionment with existing governmental machinery was a result. State and local constitutions and charters grew longer and more detailed as reformers tried to reduce the discretion of legislative bodies. Limitations on the length and frequency of state legislative sessions were imposed to limit the amount of harm they could do. And at every level, reformers began to cast around for new governmental machinery that would provide a high level of responsible government service while avoiding the high costs of unalloyed representative mechanisms.

Thus began the quest for neutral competence in government officials, a quest which has continued to the present day. The core value of this search was ability to do the work of government expertly, and to do it according to explicit, objective standards rather than to personal or party or other obligations and loyalties.[8] The slogan of the neutral competence school became, "Take administration out of politics."

This school produced its own rationale and mechanisms for this purpose. The rationale was the now-familiar politics-administration dichotomy, according to which politics and administration are distinct and separable processes that should therefore be assigned to separate and distinct organs. The mechanisms were independent boards and commissions and the merit system, which were designed to insulate many public officials and public policies from political pressures.

The movement gathered momentum after the Civil War, although the first agitation for some of its objectives goes back even further. In local and state governments, library boards and park boards and police boards and boards of health and finance boards and utilities commissions and boards of education and boards of assessment and equalization and boards and commissions for a dozen other purposes mushroomed up all over the governmental landscape. At the federal level, the Interstate Commerce Commission came into being, to be followed in the Twentieth Century by a host of like bodies. These agencies, at every level, differed from each other in details, but had the same underlying structure: their members were appointed for overlapping terms supposedly on the basis of their reputations for general ability and character and specialized knowledge. They were granted wide discretion and secure tenure for substantial periods, and were expected to formulate policy on nonpolitical premises. Objectivity was reinforced in some instances by mandatory bipartisan membership on the boards. The exigencies of the times made it necessary for legislatures to delegate power to administrative agencies; the advocates of neutral competence deflected delegation from the chief executives and the departments under their control to what was later to be branded "the headless fourth branch of government."

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[8] Proponents of this value generally did not demean representative institutions; on the contrary, they claimed their programs would strengthen those institutions by rationalizing governmental operations and improving their quality to such an extent that elected officers would be in a position to exert greater control over policy than they ever could hope to do in the prevailing political jungle. The case for neutral competence has normally been made not as an alternative to representativeness, but as a fulfillment of it.

The disillusionment of some was so thorough, however, that they lost faith completely in representativeness, in the capacity of a people to rule themselves, and returned to advocacy of rule by an aristocracy of talent. Civil service reform was, in fact, a movement which found its leaders among the grandsons and great-grandsons of the "Patricians" of early days, among the "Old Whigs" and their sons, among those who had been enamored of, or grew up under, British or German or French institutions (for example, the Adamses, Godkin, Schurz, Villard, Rosengarten), and among the urban mercantile and older businesses or professions rather than among the new industrialists. Distrust of the populace may still be observed in some modern writers and even in some current supporters of the neutral competence idea, but, for the most part, the concept of representation was so deeply ingrained in American thinking—and, indeed, in American emotions, for the word has become a revered one—that few dare to attack it openly whatever their beliefs may be.

The merit system, peculiarly, made its greatest advances where boards and commissions were slowest to gain a foothold—the federal government. Pressure for the merit system began before the Civil War; its first fruit was the federal Civil Service Act of 1883. Initially, the objectives of the program were confined principally to controlling the selection of government workers by taking the power to hire staff from the hands of executive heads (who were politicians) and lodging it with experts who, if they did not actually appoint personnel, at least could screen out all but those who could pass tests of one sort or another. This aspect of the program spread rapidly in the federal government; despite the subsequent growth of the federal service, about nine out of ten government employees today are under some form of merit appointment. But the process did not stop with the removal of the appointing power from politics; over the years, the Civil Service Commission extended its surveillance to dismissal, promotion, and position classification; eventually, with the aid of new legislation, the political activities of civil servants were reduced to little more than voting. A wall was erected between the government bureaucracy and the politicians, a wall policed by the Civil Service Commission.[7]

The quest for neutral competence, though it began about a century ago, has never waned. The training of civil servants became steadily more formal and systematic as time passed; courses, departments, and even schools of administration appeared in universities. Organization and methods analysis became a profession in itself. Boards and commissions are still common modes of handling administrative problems—witness, for example, the Atomic Energy Commission. Supporters of the merit system continue unabated their efforts to extend it "upward, outward, and downward." The desire to make government employment an attractive career service was given new voice by the Commission of Inquiry on Public Service Personnel a generation ago, and by the Task Force on Personnel and Civil Service of the Second Hoover Commission more recently. The city manager plan—and even the town, county, and state manager plans—have continued to score successes. Neutral competence is still a living value among students of government, career civil servants, and, perhaps more significantly, among much of the general populace.

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[7] The states and localities were slow to follow suit. By the turn of the century, only two states had enacted civil service legislation and only a few of the largest cities. Even today, the formal merit system still has a long way to go at these levels: states and localities remain the prime targets of the civil service reformers. But they have made some impressive gains during the last quarter-century, and the idea is still spreading.

The Quest for Executive Leadership. Just as the excessive emphasis on representativeness brought with it bitterly disappointing difficulties unforeseen by its advocates, so too the great stress on neutral competence proved to be a mixed blessing. And just as the failures of the machinery established with an eye primarily to representativeness helped produce the reaction toward neutral competence, so too the weaknesses of the governmental arrangements devised by the latter school—or, more accurately, the weaknesses of government resulting from the work of *both* schools—gave impetus to the supporters of a third value: executive leadership.

For both earlier philosophies, and the mechanisms to which they gave rise, created a thrust toward fragmentation of government, toward the formation of highly independent islands of decision-making occupied by officials who went about their business without much reference to each other or to other organs of government. Neither elected administrative officials nor independent boards and commissions welcomed direction from the chief executives; the former were supported by constituencies in much the same way as governors and mayors, and their tenure was linked largely to their vote-getting prowess, while the latter generally remained in office longer than the chief executives and depended very little on them for support. Besides, as these officials and agencies became more accomplished in their respective areas of specialization, they tended to resent efforts of "laymen" and "amateurs" to intervene; this tendency revealed itself even in some civil servants nominally under the chief executives, who, though formally subject to dismissal, turned out in practice to have quite secure tenure, and who, by adept maneuvers in negotiating bureaucratic armistices ("memoranda of agreement") and in forming alliances with legislative committees and clientele groups, succeeded in carving out for themselves broad areas of discretion free of real supervision by their political chiefs.

The drive toward fragmentation could not be effectively countered by legislative bodies, despite their vast statute-making, financial, and investigative powers. Even Congress can exercise only a general and intermittent oversight over administrative agencies, and has had to confine itself to providing general standards guiding the exercise of administrative discretion and to occasional intervention to correct abuses or to force specific changes in policy. And state legislatures and city councils and county boards operate under still greater limitations; many of these bodies are in session for only brief periods out of each year (or biennium), and administrative officials conduct the business of government with great latitude in the long intervals between meetings. Moreover, even if legislatures met often enough and had enough technical assistance of their own to exert control over administration, their composition and procedures would render them incapable of providing integration; working through tens of committees, reaching decisions through processes of compromise and concession among representatives of small territorials units, functioning increasingly as reviewing bodies for proposals placed before them by executive and administrative agencies and by interest groups, they are generally too slow and too fragmented to perform this function effectively.

Neither have the courts been able to integrate the component elements of American government. They were not designed for this responsibility, and they are completely unable to discharge it. Limited to refereeing disputes between contending parties, formal in procedure and deliberate in method, they could not play this role even had they been willing. In fact, they have increasingly moved toward acceptance of findings of fact by administrative organizations and toward restriction of their own activities to review of questions of jurisdiction and procedure.

The centrifugal drives of the representativeness and neutral competence institutions thus found no important counter-force in the legislatures or in the courts. So the efforts to maximize these values brought with them the dispersion of governmental policy-making processes.

There were widespread criticisms of this fragmentation.[8] It bred chaos; agencies pursued contradictory policies in related fields. It fomented conflict; agencies engaged in bitter bureaucratic warfare to establish their spheres of jurisdiction. It opened gaps in the provision of service or of regulation; clienteles were sometimes denied benefits or escaped supervision because they fell between agencies. It was costly; many agencies maintained overhead organizations that could have been replaced more cheaply and effectively by a common organization, and citizens had to make their own way through bureaucratic labyrinths. And, most important of all, it led to irresponsibility; no one quite knew how the pattern of organization and program came into existence or what could be done to alter it, each segment of the fragmented governments became a self-directing unit, the impact of elections on the conduct of government was minimized, and special interest groups often succeeded in virtually capturing control of individual agencies. No one seemed to be steering the governmental machinery, though everyone had a hand in it. At best, it seemed to be drifting (and just when the growth of the economic system appeared to make greater direction necessary), while at worst it showed signs of flying apart or grinding to a stop. These were among the forces that persuaded many students of government that chief executives had to be built up to take charge of the machinery.

The office of the chief executive became their hope because it furnished the only available means of achieving the end sought.[9] Movement toward strengthening chief executives began long before there was an explicit body of doctrine to explain and justify it. In the federal government, it took the form of struggles between Presidents and Congress for control of policy. Since the Presidency was set up with strong constitutional powers at the very start, the battle raged over the breadth of the powers conferred rather than over formal constitutional changes. Those powers were firmly defended, liberally interpreted, and gradually expanded under the strong Presidents from Washington on. The governors, on the other hand, having been granted few powers at the start, gained strength slowly, largely through constitutional amendment, in the course of the Nineteenth Century. In the same period, many city executives developed from mere chairmen of councils to weak mayors and then to strong mayors, and there was even an occasional step in this direction among the rural units of government. These things were taking place even while the emphasis on representativeness was predominant; they continued after the pursuit of neutral competence became the order of the day; but the Twentieth Century was well on its way before executive leadership became a systematic quest supported by articulate theories, and before it really began to gather speed.

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[8] Criticisms, that is to say, of the fragmentation "in general." When it came to the particular fragments over which they exerted their greatest influence, legislators, bureaucrats, party organizers, and interest groups were often defensive of their special positions and hostile to integrating remedies which might disturb their control.

One of the first signs of the new emphasis was the rapid spread of the executive budget in government. For a long time, agency requests for funds were considered individually, and there was no central point at which total expenditures were reviewed and the competing claims balanced against each other in the light of the resources available; indeed, very often, the only way governments could figure out how much they were spending was to add up the appropriation bills after they had been passed. The reformers turned to the chief executives to rationalize the spending process, and out of it came the now familiar phenomena of executive review and adjustment of agency requests, and the submittal of a comprehensive budget supposed to make it possible to see the overall spending pattern. The practice was often far short of ideal, but, for the first time, chief executives were given a powerful instrument with which to control administrative behavior; it was a major advance in striving to equip them to integrate American government. A few large cities and states adopted budgetary legislation during the first two decades of the Twentieth Century, and the Taft Commission on Efficiency and Economy in 1912 urged such a measure upon the federal government. By the middle of the third decade, many of the largest cities, virtually all of the states, and the federal government had budget laws on the books. Since then, in general, the tendency has been toward continued increase in the budgetary powers of chief executives, and toward adoption of the process by those jurisdictions in which it did not previously obtain. A large body of literature now backs up this practice, and, though the lack of a *theory* of budgeting (as contrasted with beliefs about the appropriate *machinery* for budgeting) has been pointed out, the executive-budget doctrine is widely accepted and rarely challenged.

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[9] Party bosses occasionally did serve this function, but *only* occasionally, for it must be remembered that our political parties are really congeries of smaller organizations in most places and therefore hardly equipped to provide governmental integration. Besides, they were phenomena from which governmental designers were seeking to deliver the governmental process.

Another indication of the concern with executive leadership is the administrative reorganization movement. It is frequently described as having begun in 1917, when Illinois adopted a sweeping change in its administrative structure, although such measures had been unsuccessfully urged in other states several years earlier. Under this plan, the number of agencies was reduced, and they were grouped into comparatively few departments headed by officials appointed by the governor; an administrative pyramid, with the governor standing at the apex, was the goal, and if it was rarely achieved completely, the extent to which it was approximated is indeed remarkable considering the degree of fragmentation prior to the changes. The number of elected administrative officials was sharply diminished, and ballots became correspondingly shorter. The appointing and removal power of the governor was also increased. In a single vast upheaval, the reorganizers sought to elevate him from an almost impotent exhorter to a powerful leader; if their efforts did not—as they could not—*immediately* produce the consequences sought, it was not very long before they began to bear fruit. Administratively and politically, the Illinois governor ascended to new eminence and influence. And more than half the states, some cities, and a few counties and towns, followed Illinois' lead. All during the 'twenties and 'thirties, surveys of government machinery were commonplace, and they became even more so after World War II as the first federal Hoover Commission touched off a wave of "little Hoover Commissions" in the states and many cities. "Concentration of authority and responsibility," "functional integration," "direct lines of responsibility," "grouping of related services," "elimination of overlapping and duplication," and "need for coordination" echoed through state capitols, city and town halls, and even through some county courthouses as chief executives became the new center of governmental design.

At the federal level, there were occasional adjustments and readjustments in the machinery of government in the early part of the century, and the President was even invested with broad powers of reorganization during the emergencies of World War I and the depression. But it was not until the mushrooming agencies of the New Deal strained that machinery to its limits that the practices and supporting dogmas of the reorganizers made their appearance in strength in Washington. Few clearer statements of the executive leadership value than the *Report of the President's Committee on Administrative Management* have ever been published;[10] with its recommendations on pulling the administrative functions of the independent regulatory commissions back under the President,[11] on drawing the government corporations back into the hierarchy,[12] on bringing personnel management under close direction by the President, on strengthening the White House staff, on getting the General Accounting Office out of the pre-auditing field and returning this operation to the executive branch, and in the tightly reasoned explanations of these recommendations (which were tied to the peg of the separation of powers), the Committee offered the classic presentation of the reorganization aspects of the executive leadership school.[13]

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[10] And no clearer or more scholarly justifications of this value than E. Pendleton Herring, *Public Administration and the Public Interest* (New York, 1936).

[11] This point of view received additional support at the state level, although in restrained tones, from James W. Fesler in his *The Independence of State Regulatory Commissions* (Chicago, 1942).

[12] See also, for example, V. O. Key, Jr., "Government Corporations," in Fritz M. Marx, ed., *Elements of Public Administration* (New York, 1946).

The Reorganization Act of 1939, which reversed one formal relationship of the President to Congress by conferring initiatory responsibility for reorganization plans on the former and authorizing the latter in effect to veto such proposals, reflected in practice the theory of the Report; even the frequent use of the legislative veto does not reduce the significance of this expansion of executive power, and the fierceness of the periodic battles over renewal of the Act suggests both Congressmen and Presidents are conscious of this significance. In the course of the years since the Report, without much fanfare, other recommendations of the Committee have been put into practice, too; the influence of the Committee continued to make itself felt for a long time.

The first Hoover Commission was considerably less emphatic about strengthening the chief executive than its predecessor, and the second Hoover Commission has displayed, if anything, some coldness (if not outright hostility) to the concept. It is conceivable, therefore, that the reorganization movement has for the time being run its course in the federal government. But it would probably be an error to write off entirely this phase of the quest for executive leadership.

A third index of this quest, an index related to, but distinguishable from, the developments in budgeting and administrative reorganization, is the increase in the size of executive staffs. The archetype is the Executive Office of the President with its hundreds of specialists providing the President with advice on every aspect of policy, reviewing legislative proposals to work out the Presidential attitude, studying administrative management from the President's point of view, planning, researching, furnishing legal counsel, serving as a source of information alternative and supplementary to the formal hierarchy, and studded with "the President's men," responsible and loyal to him and him alone. This is a far cry from the days when a President's secretariat consisted of a few aides who helped him with his official correspondence; it has helped to give the chief executive the means with which to direct the administration he heads and to formulate programs and press them into statute and then into operation; it has helped make him a real center of political and administrative power. In like fashion, the executive offices of many of the governors have been transformed into instruments of leadership, and some local executives have been similarly equipped; at these levels, the evolution as been somewhat less dramatic, but not much less effective. The tendencies may be uneven in their fulfillment, but they are pronounced.

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[13] To be sure, the Committee also advocated expansion of the merit system, and restated the argument that stronger executive leadership would mean greater popular control of government (i.e., representativeness), thus indicating how deep-seated these parallel values were. But this cannot obscure the basic premises of the Committee's Report, nor negate its general impact: it is overwhelmingly for executive leadership in sentiment.

Doctrinally, the sharp conceptual cleavage between politics and administration, which gained currency during the years when neutral competence was ascendent, and which served as such a useful philosophical prop for the machinery favored in those years, became an impediment to the justification of executive leadership. For one thing, chief executives, in whom administrative responsibility and power were to be lodged, were also partisan politicians. Moreover, one of the main reasons advanced for seeking integration was elimination of the fragmentation resulting from acceptance of the idea of the separability of politics and administration. Gradually, therefore, the politics-administration dichotomy fell out of favor in public administration, and the doctrine of the continuity of the policy-formulating process, better suited to the aims of executive leadership, began to replace it. Before long, the traditional orthodoxy became old-fashioned and found few defenders.

By every measure, then, the years from 1910 to 1950 were characterized by the rise of the quest for executive leadership to a place of pre-eminence in administrative thought and action.

The Concurrence of Values. For expository purposes, the quest for the three values has here been treated as sequential, and, to be sure, each had a different high point in time. Nevertheless, it is worth pausing to reiterate that at no point was any of them pursued to the complete exclusion of one or both of the others; evidence of interest in all three can be found at any stage of our history, sometimes in a single document by a single author. As has been observed, the defense of any one was often framed in terms of advancement of the others simultaneously. The story is thus one of changing balance among the values, not of total displacement.

II. THE COALITION

For many years, the proponents of neutral competence and the partisans of executive leadership were able to make common cause, and their alliance became so imbedded in their thinking that the differences between them were hardly recognized. The divisive factors beginning to emerge today then lay hidden beneath the mutual striving after a shared goal—a merit system to replace the spoils system.[14] Much of the standard literature of public administration was written during this honeymoon period and therefore embraced both values at once.

That the members of the neutral competence school should support the merit system as against the spoils system is not at all surprising; this reform lay at the core of their program for redesigning governmental organization. But it does require some explanation to account for the position of the executive leadership people, since spoils were allegedly one of the most effective devices through which executive influence could be exerted. There would seem to be a contradiction between advocacy of measures to strengthen executives on the one hand and endorsement of a system that appeared to reduce executive influence on the other.

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[14] "Merit system" and "spoils system," as used in this section of this paper, include, but are not restricted to, personnel management. Patronage, it will be seen, is but one aspect —albeit the principal one—of spoils, which includes contracts, purchases, and other "favors." The remedies of the reformers were aimed at every aspect.

The contradiction is more apparent than real. The spoils system had its uses for chief executives, but, as it operated in this country, it never really gave these officers control of the administrative hierarchy. As a source of inducements to persuade legislators to support executive-sponsored measures, it was quite helpful at times. It was also valuable in providing incentives to attract workers for the parties. But it never furnished the executives with loyal, enthusiastic, capable, disciplined administrative machines; it did not make them chief administrators.

Federal patronage, for example, about which more is known than has been revealed about patronage practices at any other level of government, was distributed largely through Senators and Representatives, hopefully in return for the legislators' votes on issues in which the Presidents were interested. But Congressmen ordinarily had to farm out their patronage to the party organizations in their states and districts, and even dissident wings of Presidential parties which did not give Presidential measures consistent support in the legislative chambers could often count on nominating some federal appointees. During election campaigns the Presidents needed the support of all segments of the parties and could not, therefore, afford to weaken them for their legislative defections. In short, the patronage system strengthened party leaders and legislators more than it did executives. Thus the appointing power of the Presidents was bargained away—shrewdly sometimes, to be sure, from the point of view of legislation and of political survival, but at some cost from the standpoint of administrative management. Moreover, if a President's own nomination was itself the result of bargaining in which he was the chosen rather than the chooser, then his appointing power was largely taken away at the start.

It was not just a matter of creating "ten enemies and one ingrate" with every appointment. Equally important, patronage tended to fragment the executive branch as much as did election of administrative officers. For the loyalty of appointees who owed their positions only formally to the appointing official, but in fact to the state and local party units that nominated them, lay with the nominating powers. In the exercise of their legal authorizations, the appointees tended to be as responsive to individual legislators, local and state party leaders, and local community pressures as to their nominal superiors in the hierarchy. Moreover, since their tenure was sure to be cut short as soon as the opposing party won an election, they tried to squeeze all they could out of their posts while they occupied them; their own personal interests, therefore, were likely to take precedence over official directives when the two conflicted. Trying to lead such a staff was like trying to play croquet in Wonderland; subordinates, like the mallets, balls, and wickets of the fairy tale, operated with a high degree of independence.

To the supporters of executive leadership, it was clear that the lateral pulls of political parties and individual legislators had to be reduced, and the incentives for public employees to exploit their offices for personal advantage eliminated. Only then could the other means of building up executive influence be made effective; only then could the President assert his authority over administration. So the executive leadership supporters joined the defenders of neutral competence in the drive toward a merit system of appointment, expecting that a bureaucracy chosen by objective standards would be at least as responsive to Presidential direction as to party and legislative pressures. A merit system of appointment controlled by a Civil Service Commission thus served the ends of two schools of thought; for different reasons, and in pursuit of different goals, they united behind it.

Similar factors apparently operated to promote the adoption of objective standards of practice for other activities corrupted by the spoils system. Political discrimination in public contracting, public works, government purchasing, granting of charters and franchises, distribution of benefits and subsidies, and the enforcement of the law, provided a harvest mainly reaped by state and local party and government leaders. These practices, too, gave a bit of leverage to executives in their legislative and political roles, but they did nothing for executive control of the executive branch. So the executive leadership school approved and worked for the adoption of rigorous statutory limitations, cutting party and individual legislators out of these processes as far as possible just as the civil service system freed the appointing process from their depredations. Here, too, though apparently striving for different objectives, the neutral competence and executive leadership groups joined hands.

Consequently, the flood of literature on public administration after World War I unanimously applauded many of the measures designed to take government out of politics. By the 'thirties, however, as the emphasis on executive leadership increased, evidences of discord grew more persistent.

III. THE EMERGING CONFLICT

In thirty years the number of federal civilian employees has more than quadrupled. If power were measurable, the federal bureaucracy's power would probably turn out to have increased by an even greater factor: Governmental policy is now formulated in administrative regulations and orders, as the growth of the Federal Register vividly attests; judicial proceedings before administrative agencies probably exceed in quantity those before the courts; licensing and administrative decisions regarding benefits and subsidies, are the order of the day; and all of this is handled by administrative officials under the very broadest of mandates from Congress and the President. Much of our legislation originates in administrative agencies, and most proposed legislation is submitted to such agencies to determine what the President's position on it ought to be. A corresponding growth of administrative influence has taken place in all large-scale organizations, both governmental and private, but few have a record as dramatic in this respect as the federal government.

The growth of governmental bureaucracy in size and importance was subjected to vehement attacks in this country and abroad. For the most part, however, the attacks were disregarded, especially by political scientists, because it was clear that they were not aimed at the bureaucracy *per se*, but at the governmental *programs* administered by the civil servants. The programs themselves were too popular for their critics to assail directly with any real hope of success; the assault therefore took an oblique approach, hitting at what appeared to be a more vulnerable target. The criticism was therefore not taken very seriously in the study of public administration. Students of this subject became ardent and sometimes uncritical defenders of bureaucrats. Now that the controversy over the New Deal has subsided, however, the bureaucracy itself is more or less taken for granted, and attacks upon it are less frequent, less vehement, and less publicized than they once were. This has helped students of public administration to take a somewhat more dispassionate view of the bureaucracy, and some second thoughts may be at hand.

For though the mechanisms of neutral competence were remarkably successful in reducing the influence of the political parties on the administrative hierarchy, they did not necessarily increase the President's control over administration. Rather, they encouraged the development of "self-directing" groups within the bureaucracy, and these groups in turn cultivated their own sources of support among professional groups concerned with the subject matter over which the services have jurisdiction, among their clienteles, and among appropriate Congressional committees and subcommittees. The components of the "neutral" bureaucracy, by virtue of their expertness and information and alliances, have become independent sources of decision-making power, and Presidents will probably find them no easier to direct—indeed, perhaps even more intractable, than their partisan predecessors.

As a consequence, some of the standard devices for promoting neutral competence have been openly questioned in the literature of public administration. As noted earlier, the independence of regulatory commissions and government corporations has been vigorously criticized. The Brownlow Committee also sought to make personnel management an arm of the White House and to confine the Civil Service Commission to quasi-judicial functions and a role as "watchdog" of the merit system. This principle was endorsed recently by the staff of the Temporary (New York) State Commission on Coordination of State Activities, by a minority (comprising 11 members) of the Mayor's Committee on Management Survey of the City of New York, by the Sixth American Assembly,[15] and, implicitly, by the present administration in Washington, under which the chairman of the Civil Service Commission serves as administrative head of that agency and is located in the executive mansion. A rising chorus of voices has also begun to call for decentralization of authority for personnel management to line departments,[16] a position stated with particular clarity and force by Commissioner James K. Pollock of the first Hoover Commission in a minority report on personnel. The establishment of Schedule C in the Federal government service in 1953, rolling back merit system protections from a number of positions of a policy-making and confidential character, despite the partisan components of the impetus behind this move, was in large measure an effort to preserve the power of the President over policy. More recently, the arguments of the second Hoover Commission for extension of civil service protections to the very highest administrative officials (in the form of a "senior civil service") have been sharply questioned.[17] Recommendations for an institutionalized corps of political executives have been assailed as likely to weaken the President.[18] The premises of the city-manager plan have been described as inapplicable to large cities, and some spirited defenses of elected mayors have appeared.[19] And all of these views have been reflected in the kinds of administrative improvements adopted in many jurisdictions in recent years. Other similar defections from the coalition between the neutrality and the leadership camps can be found in current literature and practice, but it is not necessary to labor the point; patently, these straws in the wind are examples of the growing divergence between the two philosophies that makes it increasingly doubtful that their adherents will continue to support the same governmental theories or reforms.

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[15] *Staff Report on Civil Service*, State of New York Legislative Document No. 42 (1953); *Modern Management for the City of New York* (1953), Vol. 2, pp. 216 ff.; *The Federal Government Service* (New York: Graduate School of Business, Columbia University, 1954), with special emphasis on Chapter 2, "The President, Congress, and the Federal Government Service," by Herman M. Somers.

[16] Cf., Norman J. Powell, *Personnel Administration in Government* (New York, 1956), pp. 164–71.

Moreover, the philosophical divisions over structural values among the scholars have been intensified by differing political—i.e., program—views. Many of the champions of increased governmenal activities, in the realms both of services (welfare, financial, industrial) and economic regulation, tend to rally behind chief executives and especially behind the President. The reason is fairly obvious: Demands for expansion of government service and regulation originate frequently (though not exclusively) in urban areas, and urban areas have their greatest political effect on the election of chief executives and their smallest impact on the state legislatures and Congress, where they are substantially underrepresented. So executives tend generally to be more sympathetic to those demands than do the legislators, and those who favor an expanding role for government look to elected executives, as a rule, when they want to impress their preferences on governmental policy. Quite apart, then, from the concern about the organizational problems created by fragmentation of government, there are considerations of political preference and strategy that generate support for executive leadership.

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[17] E.g., Herman M. Somers, "Some Reservations about the Senior Civil Service," *Personnel Administration*, Vol. 19, pp. 10 ff. (January–February, 1956); and Paul P. Van Riper, *The Dialectics of the Civil Service* (mimeo., Cornell University, 1956).

[18] See the papers (mimeo.) delivered by Harlan Cleveland and Wallace S. Sayre at the Conference on the Political Executive, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton, New Jersey, March, 1956.

[19] See Temporary (New York) State Commission to Study the Organisational Structure of the Government of the City of New York, *Four Steps to Better Government of New York City* (1953), Chapter 2; Wallace S. Sayre, "The General Manager Idea for Large Cities," *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 14, pp. 253 ff. (Autumn, 1954).

By the same token, there are issues of political attitudes and tactics that engender enthusiasm for legislative bodies regardless of questions of representativeness. Legislatures, because of the composition and the sources of their political strength, offer the greatest leverage to those who resist the growth of governmental activities—or, more accurately, who oppose those governmental activities sought by urban populations. Not, then, because legislatures are more representative, but because this is where the backers of a particular political attitude can exert their greatest political stength, many individuals recommend in their proposals for governmental reform that these bodies be strengthened both relatively and absolutely.

Finally, it might be inferred that some reformers distrust all politicians and electorates and pin their hopes on the expertise and efficiency of a professionalized bureaucracy. They seem to be moved not merely by a concern for governmental structure but by political values that include an implicit contempt for what we ordinarily understand to be the democratic process and an explicit respect for an aristocracy of talent that borders on a latter-day faith in technocracy.[20]

So the tendencies toward division reinforce each other, and there are no visible factors thrusting toward alliances like that fortuitous one developed by a peculiar conjunction of circumstances during the infancy of public administration as an academic and occupational specialty. As a result, the language of public administration is likely to become increasingly strategic and tactical in tone rather than "scientific." Just as the naked power issues of the legislatively oriented groups came to the surface in the recent efforts to weaken the Presidency—viz., the Twenty-Second Amendment, which reduces the leadership potential of a President in his second term; the efforts to strip away Presidential reorganization authority in 1953; the fight over the proposed Bricker Amendment; the continuing efforts to revamp the Electoral College in such a way as to reduce the political effectiveness of the urban-labor-liberal entente that has been partly responsible for the aggressive and expansive use of Presidential power—so too, many of the reorganization issues will be discussed in power terms in the future as the public administration groups aligned with the executive and with the bureaucracy, respectively, pull apart. The question that will be asked about suggested reorganizations is not, "What, according to the canons of management science, is the best organization?" but, "What will be the effect of this measure on the institution we support?" The differences in the answers will sharpen the theoretical distinctions between the wings of the public administration group and hasten estrangement of the factions.[21]

[20] There would seem to be an emergent split within this group. Some backers of a professionalized public service are apparently thinking in terms of a corps of administrative generalists to occupy the top levels of administrative agencies regardless of agency subject matter. Others seem to conceive of an administrative elite of occupational specialists—engineers, lawyers, doctors, social workers, foresters, etc.

[21] One may even hazard the guess that the American Society for Public Administration will remain firmly in the hands of the neutral competence group while the executive leadership school in public administration looks more and more to the American Political Science Association as its forum.

To many students of public administration trained in the 'twenties, 'thirties, and 'forties, the new atmosphere will be a strange and perhaps a bewildering one, fraught with hostilities. To students trained in the 'sixties, the literature of the earlier period, with its "principles," may seem quaint and even naive. Political scientists of the remoter future, looking back, may well conclude that it is not easy to bridge the gap between a generation seeking to encourage the growth of a professional bureaucracy and a generation in turmoil over how to control it.

Source: H. Kaufman, 'Emerging conflicts in the doctrines of public administration', *American Political Science Review*, vol. 50, no. 4, pp. 1057–73.

Three views of change in educational politics

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Laurence Iannaccone

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Introduction

The world of educational politics and change today teems with dilemmas. But as Getzels has pointed out, "dilemmas do not present themselves automatically as *problems* capable of resolution or even of profitable contemplation." [1] The purpose of this chapter is to describe the meaning and significance of political change in education and to explain it insofar as the research on educational politics allows. The approach taken rests on the belief that problem finding is the critical activity in the advancement of knowledge. In essence, the chapter consists of three answers in search of a question.

It is possible to view the research on change in educational governance as using three alternative orientations. The first of these orientations is the focus upon change in the service function of government, a function that refers to those processes that either produce or provide activities or resources that will meet socially perceived needs such as the need for education. A second orientation for research focuses upon the political function of government, the function of managing conflict and settling disputes between contesting coalitions over matters of public importance.[2] Public controversy lies at the heart of this function.

The conceptual separation of these two functions is particularly useful to professionals in a public service because the influence of expertise is different with respect to each of them. In the service function the application of expertise is usually dominant in dealing with questions, but professional expertise is significantly less useful in the resolution of political disputes. Indeed, such disputes often challenge the validity of professional expertise. The distinction between the service and political functions of government becomes particularly important when public controversy about education increases.

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[1] Jacob W. Getzels, "Problem Finding" (Address given at the 343rd Convocation of the University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill., March 16, 1973).

[2] The distinction between the service and political functions of government is made in Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, *City Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963).

A third orientation of the research on change in educational governance pays particular attention to a special type of political function. When public controversy arises over the ideological assumptions and organizational structures that have customarily managed conflict, governments are called upon to settle disputes over the system for settling disputes. Such conditions occurring in senior governments may produce a constitutional crisis. In junior governments with delegated powers, such as an educational government, this type of controversy often evokes the intervention of senior governments, which are the sources of delegated powers. If continued long enough, the intervention will take the form of restructuring the junior governments. The influence of technical expertise, which is dominant in the service function, is least relevant and least powerful in dealing with questions about the nature of the system for settling disputes.

Each of these three research orientations begins with a different question and hence with a different definition of the problem with which the research is concerned. The first orientation addresses the question, "What is the nature of the politics of educational change?" The second asks primarily, "What is the nature of political change in education?" And the third orientation asks, "What is the nature of change in the politics of education?"

Administrative Politics: The Politics of Educational Change

Research focusing on the service function provides insight on an administrative perspective that developed from municipal reforms that restructured educational government at the turn of the century. This administrative perspective centers upon the operational realities of educational policy and decision making, reflecting a theory of government that became dominant at that time. As Waldo points out in referring to public administration, "In essence, this new theory or philosophy of government was a reinterpretation of the meaning of democracy for America, one for the new, urban America. . . . It sought to attain the values of equality and freedom for citizens by making government strong and efficient."[3] In commenting upon this development, Schattschneider writes: "While we were thinking about something else a new government was created in the United States, so easily and so quietly that most of us were wholly unaware of what was going on."[4]

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[3] Dwight Waldo, *The Study of Public Administration* (New York: Random House, 1955), pp. 19-20.

The administrative-political system centered upon by the first research orientation was produced by a single reform program and it continues to be the dominant system for determining educational policy.[5] Decisions produced by this administrative-political system and the consequent changes in educational operations are the primary objects of inquiry in this research approach. The bulk of the day in, day out interactions between education and the political order fall within this category. The research pays attention, therefore, to the customary political processes in educational governments by which the demands and supports of organized publics (including professional ones) are routinely translated into incremental policy changes in educational operations. This kind of research has the virtue of centering attention upon the incremental character of policy making, a pattern that Lindblom found to be most common in the making of policy.[6] The research clarifies the routinization of decisions in educational policy making noted by Smoley.[7] It explains the function of changes in educational decisions, whether reactive or proactive, to maintain the policy system.

This first research orientation has been particularly fruitful in answering the question, "Who governs in educational governments generally?"[8] It provides a useful insight into the meaning of the episodic political crises and ephemeral issues, described by Martin as the other side of the coin of routinization, and into the control of this political system by the educational establishment.[9]

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4. E. E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1960), p. vii.

5. L. Harmon Zeigler and M. Kent Jennings, with the assistance of G. Wayne Peake, *Governing American Schools: Political Interaction in Local Districts* (North Scituate, Mass.: Duxbury Press, 1974).

6. Charles E. Lindblom, *The Policy-Making Process* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968).

7. Eugene R. Smoley, "Community Participation in Urban School Government" (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1965).

8. Laurence Iannaccone and Peter J. Cistone, *The Politics of Education* (Eugene, Oreg.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, University of Oregon, 1974).

9. Roscoe C. Martin, *Government and the Suburban School* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1962).

Willower's functional analysis of schools suggests that these petty political crises most often fill the vacuum produced by the absence of political mechanisms for facilitating public articulation of value choices, an absence that Iannaccone has characterized elsewhere as the lack of a loyal opposition.[10] Such findings are important for describing the essential character of educational politics for most of this century.

The customary politics of educational change has most often entailed adjustments among participating subunits of the administrative-political system for establishing school policy. The subunits have combined technical-professional and social elites that operate with consensual processes within nonpartisan political and governmental structures. As a result, educational policy making regarding the service functions of educational governments has been largely "privatized," to use Schattschneider's terminology.

Schattschneider offers a political theory useful for understanding the significance of the politics of an administrative-political policy system in contrast to a system of extended public controversy.[11] For him, the universal language of conflict is at the root of all politics and the extreme contagiousness of political conflict is the central political fact in a free society.[12] His theory contains two basic elements: (a) the few individuals who are actively engaged in the center of a conflict, and (b) the much larger passive audience fascinated by the conflict who may enter it as contestants rather than remain as spectators. For Schattschneider, therefore, the central focus of political analysis is the relationship between the combatants and the audience. The audience is never truly neutral, it is overwhelmingly larger than the combatants, and its direct involvement in the conflict will not only determine the outcome but will likely change the organization of the combatants. Organization is the mobilization of bias for action, and changes in organization will change the values at issue. The spectators, therefore, are "a part of the calculus of all conflicts."[13] The extent to which otherwise passive citizens become involved in a political conflict determines the scope of its contagion. Hence his advice to the political analyst: "Watch the audience." More precisely, changes in the highly permeable boundary separating combatant from audience will indicate changes in at least two sorts of political phenomena. First, there are changes in the composition and organization of the contesting coalitions, including changes in their status and role characteristics. Second, the character of the issues that will then become significant for every combination of contestant and issue will involve the domination of some issues and the subordination of others.[14]

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[10] Donald J. Willower, "Educational Change and Functional Equivalents," *Education and Urban Society* 2 (August 1970): 385-402; Laurence Iannaccone, *Politics in Education* (New York: Center for Applied Research in Education, 1967).

[11] Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People.*

[12] Ibid., p. 2.

[13] Ibid., p. 66.

The customary administrative politics of education has displayed considerable consistency in the nature of its contesting coalitions for most of this century. It has also displayed consistent biases toward issues that have received most attention, as well as toward those that have been accorded only peripheral status. The kinds of issues that are dear to educational professionals have commanded center stage. They include (a) the mobilization of support for educational budgets, (b) the adjustment of state aid formulas to the disadvantage of large cities, (c) the political opposition to private schools, (d) district reorganization to achieve larger local districts, and (e) the increased certification requirements and protection of educational professionals. The broader issues of race, religion, and rights of clients (pupils and parents) have been held off stage. The distinctive character of both sorts of issues and their on-stage or off-stage location are exactly what is to be expected of a privatized political system reflecting organized professional leadership for much of this century.

Schattschneider views the history of American politics as a perennial struggle between tendencies toward "privatizing conflict," which restrict its scope, and tendencies toward "socializing conflict," which enlarge its scope. Control of the scope of conflict has always been a prime instrument of political strategy. The tactics of privatizing and socializing political conflicts are influenced by the structure of the federal system, a structure that itself is the outcome of major strategic considerations for controlling the contagion of political conflict. One way to restrict the scope of conflict is to localize it. Thus, debates about the "religion" of localism in education, about local, state, and national relations, about community control, or about centralization or decentralization are in reality controversies about the scale of conflict. Schattschneider points out:

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[14] Ibid., p. 4.

> One-party systems . . . have been notoriously useful instruments for the limitation of conflict and depression of political participation. This tends to be equally true of measures designed to set up nonpartisan government or measures designed to take important public business out of politics altogether.[15]

Privatization of conflict is exactly what the structures of educational government and the political ideology resulting from the reform at the turn of the century produced. The research focused upon policy making in the service function in educational government amply describes its activities. The politics of education has been characteristically the politics of interest groups, as contrasted with the politics of party, and has thus operated largely apart from the two-party structure. The politics of education has also found its chief points of focus and impact in the local school board and the state legislature. Here again the absence of the two-party mechanisms mediating between the voter and governmental offices is reflected. Furthermore, direct democracy implied in the focus on school board operations places a premium upon achieving a consensus in the legislative process. Consequently, the politics of education has traditionally been the low visibility politics of informal agreement and consensus building among educational interest groups. It has conferred special advantages on the insider:

> It is the politics of the sacred, rural rather than secular, urban community; a politics of the priesthood rather than the hustings. The two genres of politics are different in kind. The politics of the hustings are visible and thrive on conflict and its resolution. The colorful kaleidoscope and cacophonic calliope of the campaign is its milieu. They subsist on the informal development of consensus prior to public debate.[16]

The research focus on the service function has serious weaknesses that follow from its strength. This focus cannot easily surmount the governmental philosophy that produced it. Its data categories too readily accept the political ideology and organizational structures of the service function as fixed. As Lindblom has demonstrated, the normal policy process is one of incremental change, but incremental policy making depends upon general agreement about basic ideological principles.

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[15] Ibid., p. 12.

[16] Laurence Iannaccone and Frank W. Lutz, "The Changing Politics of Education," *American Association of University Women Journal* 60 (May 1967): 160-62, 191

> Any even loosely organized set of interlocking generalizations or principles about social organization—or more specifically about politico-economic organization—is of enormous help to policy analysis. . . . All policy analysis rests to a degree on ideology so defined. . . . In effect an ideology takes certain beliefs out of the gunfire of criticism. . . . These beliefs . . . can thereafter be introduced into policy analysis as though they were settled fact. . . . Even mistaken beliefs can serve . . . because we chose a common set of assumptions.[17]

Every policy system rests upon such beliefs or political myths.[18] Most often the beliefs or myths appear to reconcile the irreconcilable and competing values dear to a society by papering over a large number of unavowed conflicts and by managing tensions too fundamental for political controversy, usually by benignly neglecting them. Some examples of these tensions are the competing values of the lay public and of the organized profession that seek to influence educational decision making, the competition for power between teachers and administrators within the profession, and the differences in attitudes and values between the upper-middle and lower classes within the lay public. Currently, the issue of elite versus egalitarian education (including the competition between elite and egalitarian outcomes of education) is a persistent part of the agenda of public schooling. Such tensions may in the final analysis be fundamentally unresolvable except as they periodically become compromised and redefined within the assumptions of the dominant political doctrine of an era. "Some controversies must be subordinated by both parties because neither side could survive the ensuing struggles."[19] So also the research with an orientation toward the service function of educational government tends to use assumptions woven into its political ideology without seeing alternatives.

The research orientation that focuses on the administrative-political system has proved useful for describing and explaining the traditionally privatized politics of education. It is ill-suited, however, for grappling with the spread of political controversy and it also tends to place the school in the role of independent variable with its politics as a dependent variable.

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[17] Lindblom, *The Policy-Making Process*, p. 23.

[18] Robert M. MacIver, *The Web of Government*, rev. ed. (New York: Free Press, 1965).

[19] Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People*, p. 76.

Political Adjustment: Political Change in Education

The second research orientation, concentrating on the political function of educational governments, is more truly a political science orientation. As Wirt and Kirst have pointed out, "For political scientists . . . the essence of the political act is the struggle of men and groups to secure the authoritative support of government for their values."[20] It follows that the political function of educational governments is to manage or to channel conflict.

The research orientation that focuses on this political function takes as its point of departure the natural laws or regularities of political change in education as found largely in four governmental arenas—the typical local education authority, the urban school district, the state, the nation. The vantage point of this orientation has the virtue of giving primary attention to the recent and increased spread of political conflicts in education. The research shows these conflicts to be theoretically explicable in part as lawful, periodic cycles of political change in education in each of these four areas of government. Thus a cycle of changes following elections in which incumbent school board members are defeated, with consequent changes in patterns of executive succession, appears significant in local school districts at specific times in their history.[21] A similar cyclical pattern is noted in urban educational politics, but with different political mechanisms.[22] Research of the past two decades on the state politics of education indicates a dramatic increase in fragmented influence structures upon state policy making.[23] The politics of education in the national government is a most sensitive indicator of the fundamental change underway in educational politics generally and perhaps in educational government itself. The educational politics of the White House, the Congress, the Supreme Court, the U.S. Office of Education, and the National Institute of Education are important indicators of basic changes. Research on the national politics of education has demonstrated basic changes in the use of federal funds to intervene in state and local educational politics.[24] It has also described the most significant planned restructuring of the U.S. Office of Education in this century.[25] At the same time, the research indicates some of the limitations upon the power of federal intervention.[26]

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[20] Frederick M. Wirt and Michael W. Kirst, *The Political Web of American Schools* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1972), p. 4.

[21] Richard O. Carlson, *Executive Succession and Organizational Change: Placebound and Career-bound Superintendents of Schools* (Chicago: Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago, 1962); Laurence Iannaccone and Frank W. Lutz, *Politics, Power, and Policy: The Governing of Local School Districts* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1970).

[22] Laurence Iannaccone, *Problems of Financing Inner-City Schools* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Research Foundation, 1971); Laurence Iannaccone and David K. Wiles, "The Changing Politics of Urban Education," *Education and Urban Society* 3 (May 1971): 255-64; Theodore J. Lowi, *At the Pleasure of the Mayor* (New York: Free Press, 1964).

[23] Stephen K. Bailey et al., *Schoolmen and Politics* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1962); Roald F. Campbell and Tim L. Mazzoni, *State Policy Making for Public Schools* (Berkeley, Calif.: McCutchan Publishing Corp., 1976); Iannaccone, *Politics in Education*; Nicholas A. Masters, Robert H. Salisbury, and Elliot H. Thomas, *State Politics and the Public Schools* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964); Mike Milstein and Robert E. Jennings, "Educational Interest Group Leaders and State Legislation: Perceptions of the Educational Policy-Making Process," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 9 (Winter 1972): 54-71.

Even a cursory review of such studies, to say nothing of reports in news media, abundantly documents the fact of a dramatic increase in the politicization of education in every type of educational government and in general American governments as well. The strength of this research approach is that its attention is centered upon the political function of managing controversy. It deals with issues of the responsiveness of educational governments.[27] It appears to have made significant contributions to our understanding of what may be lawful patterns of adjustment to periodic conditions of imbalance between public demands and the privatized tendencies of the administrative-political systems of diverse educational governments.

But this research, like that concentrating on the service function, is primarily concerned with the management of controversy within present educational governments. Such a focus is too limited, since it is concerned with political controversy within existing educational governments and with the political and ideological assumptions embodied in those governments. It tends to examine issues of citizenship and representation with the bias of concern for the responsiveness of educational governments as instruments for achieving order, efficiency, and uniformity rather than concern for the central issues of democracy itself. The spread of political conflict about education may therefore be misunderstood. The increased amount of political controversy around education noted in the research of the last two decades is not sufficiently explained. Neither is there adequate explanation for the marked increase in the rate of change of elected and appointed officeholders. Such changes could be merely a substitution of a new guard for the old, an exchange of positions between traditional "ins" for a customary group of "outs." These developments are not explained by the customary policy changes of incrementalism, in accordance with Lindblom's analysis of policy systems.[28] Such policy changes are more often than not seen as changes necessary simply to maintain the basic policy system in the midst of societal changes. Increased political conflict is seen only to vary in amount, but it also varies in kind, the latter variation being much more significant. If dealt with at all, variation in kind is handled indirectly as if it were only an aberration or a phase in the natural adjustment of the educational policy system. Furthermore, only some of that increased political controversy appears to be explicated by the natural laws of governmental adjustment through systemic periodic political crises in educational governments. Neither the examination of the research carried on under this orientation nor the explanations it offers for political change in various educational governments is likely to provide a sufficient explanation of the fundamental nature of the expansion of political conflict underway in education.

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[24] Frank J. Meinger and Richard F. Fenno, Jr., *National Politics and Federal Aid to Education* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1962); Philip Meranto, *The Politics of Federal Aid to Education in 1965: A Study in Political Innovation* (Syracuse, N.Y., Syracuse University Press, 1967).

[25] Stephen K. Bailey and Edith K. Mosher, *ESEA: The Office of Education Administers a Law* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1968).

[26] Jerome T. Murphy, "Title I of ESEA: The Politics of Implementing Federal Education Reform," *Harvard Educational Review* 41 (February 1971): 35-63; idem, "Title V of ESEA: The Impact of Discretionary Funds on State Education Bureaucracies," *Harvard Educational Review* 43 (August 1973): 362-87; Gary Orfield, *The Reconstruction of Southern Education* (New York: Wiley Interscience, 1969); Robert L. Crain, *The Politics of Desegregation* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968); Robert L. Crain et al., *School Desegregation in New Orleans: A Comparative Study in the Failure of Social Control* (Chicago: National Opinion Research Center, 1966); John F. Hughes and Anne O. Hughes, *Equal Education: A New National Perspective* (Bloomington, Ind.: University of Indiana Press, 1972); Joel S. Berke and Michael W. Kirst, *Federal Aid to Education: Who Benefits? Who Governs?* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, D. C. Heath & Co., 1972); Iannaccone, *Problems of Financing Inner-City Schools;* David O. Porter et al., *The Politics of Budgeting Federal Aid* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1973).

[27] Zeigler and Jennings, *Governing American Schools.*

The research produced by this second orientation, which was taken by a recent publication in an ERIC state-of-the-knowledge series,[29] centers on the politics of education and political change in education. There are several arguments against taking this point of departure. While this research focus has produced most of the theoretically useful findings in the politics of education, it is in its own way too narrow a view to grasp adequately the political revolution it reflects. Its strength is in its attempt to document and explain the political conflicts of education in the family of governments that are the heart of the American governmental structure. Precisely as it has fulfilled that necessary task, the research in educational politics of the last two decades has placed limitations upon itself. Explanations that depend for their primary variables upon the exclusiveness of educational politics, upon the lack of responsiveness of school systems, or upon the power of educational interests, however accurate in other respects, run the risk of misattributing causation. The approach tends to underestimate the extent to which we are encountering for the second time in this century a political revolution in education. Most important, even as data from this research have begun to indicate the presence of this revolution, its perspective tends to misattribute causation by failing to see how much the revolution is rooted in the larger political order.

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[28] Lindblom, *The Policy-Making Process.*

[29] Iannaccone and Cistone, *The Politics of Education.*

While this second orientation toward research is expanding its understanding of the increased politicization of education in different types and levels of government, and to some extent of the interaction among these types and levels, the research tends to give superficial attention to a number of issues about the whole of American educational politics. The research, like the popular communication media, tends to miss the forest for the trees. In doing so it pays tribute to the basic ideological and structural biases built into the government of education by the municipal reform.

Recent events and research support Eulau's position on the relation between politics and education:

> I think we have to think of politics, broadly conceived as including both government and societal happenings, as the independent variable and of education as the dependent variable.[30]

One implication of this assumption is that students of educational politics need to go beyond the parochial view that seeks to explain educational politics from the events and developments that occur in it alone. Education, educational politics, governments, and the political ideologies of educational politics are only a part, perhaps the smaller part, of the origin of the major changes underway. But an ethnocentric view of education tends to attribute causation to educators rather than to the political order of education. In contrast, recent research makes it increasingly clear that "the issue is misconceived when stated as 'Dare the school build a new social order?' . . . The question is, 'Dare the social order build a new school?' "[31] Again following Eulau:

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[30] Heinz Eulau, "Political Science and Education: The Long View and the Short," in *State, School, and Politics*, ed. Michael W. Kirst (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath & Co., 1972), p. 3.

> If the political order is sound, stable, legitimate, just, or whatever other criteria of "goodness" one wishes to apply, education and all that is implied by education, such as the creation of new knowledge or the transmission of traditional knowledge, flourishes. If the political order is in trouble, education is in trouble.[32]

Similarly, political conflicts in education around issues of community control, for example, have been too often seen purely as failures of educational governments. A broader perspective is necessary. As Elazar says,

> While we are concerned here with the demand for community control of schools, we must begin any inquiry into the meaning and likely consequences of that demand and its satisfaction or frustration by understanding that it is a part of a larger demand for community self-government.[33]

The focus upon the political function of governments of education makes these peculiar subsets of the federal system the units of observation, thereby missing some of the significance of the ability of the federal system to limit the spread of conflict.

Federalism is both the fundamental character of American government and the source of its pragmatic flexibility.[34] Federalism, with its structural distinctions and divisions of powers, is historically basic to the American system of educational government viewed both externally in its separation from general government and internally in its national, state, and local units. The nonhierarchical sharing pattern of the American system also is found in education. Because educational governance is shared by this family of governments, "each sphere of authority, and responsibility tends to obscure the operational realities of educational policy making."[35] So, for example, a piecemeal view of the causes of the changing politics of education tends to highlight the closed system character of educational politics and the lack of responsiveness of schools, school systems, and particular units of educational government as the antecedent conditions for increased politicization of education.[36] Consequently, as a recent review of studies in the politics of education points out, "Even within the present domains of research we note the absence of studies that move across the range of federal, state, and local educational politics. Their relationships emerge piecemeal from present work."[37] These conclusions appear valid, but they leave unanswered the question of why we are experiencing the spread of conflict in all governments around educational issues at this time. Worse, they may not be able to ask the question well.

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[31] Iannaccone and Cistone, *The Politics of Education*, p. 62.

[32] Eulau, "Political Science and Education," p. 2.

[33] Daniel Elazar, "School Decentralization in the Context of Community Control: Some Neglected Consideration," in *State, School, and Politics*, ed. Michael W. Kirst, p. 180.

[34] Morton Grodzins, *The American System*, ed. Daniel Elazar (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1968).

[35] Iannaccone and Cistone, *The Politics of Education*, p. 17.

The second research orientation has not surmounted the conceptual limitations of a federal structural frame of reference. For this reason it has paid insufficient attention to the significance of the tendencies of the federal structure to blur social class conflicts, to insulate educational issues, and to mute regional controversies. So textbook issues rage in West Virginia. Accountability and sunshine laws are debated in Florida and ignored in some other states. In some states collective bargaining is given legal sanction and changes internal power relations of the local school district. Once again, we may find that while we are thinking about something else a new educational government is being created, so easily and quietly that most of us are wholly unaware of it. Despite the longitudinal studies produced by the research on political adjustment within educational governments, the approach falls short of an adequate historical grasp of the significance of its findings. A longer historical perspective provides awareness of other periods that experienced an analogous spreading of political conflict about education. It highlights similarities in the sources of the problems fought over, the cast of characters, and the nature of the issues involved. Such a view helps strengthen understanding of the fundamental relations among political ideology, governmental structure, their political functions, and the educational outcomes of schools.[38] Without such understanding, contemporary political changes cannot be adequately comprehended. Finally, a historical orientation may even suggest in general outlines the future toward which the politics of education is moving.

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[36] Iannaccone, *Politics in Education;* Zeigler and Jennings, *Governing American Schools.*

[37] Iannaccone and Cistone, *The Politics of Education*, p. 65.

[38] Michael B. Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975).

As to analogous developments, the historical perspective suggests we may be at the end of one era in the government of education and on the threshold of another.[39] Historically, the spread of political conflict appears analogous to the upheavals in educational politics during the 1840s and 1890s. Katz and Callahan point out the significance of these decades in opening up the arena to a debate of fundamental issues.[40] Thus Katz notes the reemergence of issues about heredity and environment in the parallels he draws between 1840, 1891, and 1960.[41] For the second time within a century we are experiencing a revolution in the politics of education. In both cases the origins are to be found in the problems of the cities, problems which in both eras extend far beyond the spheres and competencies of education. The first of these revolutions, which took place around the turn of the century, restructured American educational government as municipal reform took control of urban school systems away from city political machines and their neighborhood subunits. The second, which has been developing for some two decades, displays a similar propensity and potential for transforming the structures of educational government again. Neither the administrative politics nor the political adjustment approaches discussed above are adequate to cope with these historical parallels. Finally, even the research that has centered upon periodic political readjustments in the present system of educational government tends to underestimate the extent to which its own questions are limited by assumptions that rest upon political myth. Katz takes a historical perspective, especially in viewing the period when the present system developed, and points out that alternative basic assumptions exist: "If order, efficiency, and uniformity are preferred to responsiveness, variety, and flexibility, then, indeed, bureaucracy is inevitable."[42]

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39. Raymond E. Callahan, "The American Board of Education, 1889-1960," in *Understanding School Boards*, ed. Peter J. Cistone (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, D. C. Heath & Co., 1975) pp. 19-46; Katz, *Class Bureaucracy, and Schools;* David Tyack, *Turning Points in American Educational History* (Waltham, Mass.: Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1967).

40. Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools*; Raymond E. Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1962).

41. Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools.*

42. Ibid., p. 108.

Research analyzing the changing politics within educational governments tends to ignore fundamental issues such as whether the service ought to be rendered. It reflects the prison of its data categories. Lindblom illustrates the point thus:

> Whether children are to be educated by public authority is itself a big question. How they are to be educated raises many more questions. Not surprisingly, big questions like these are not turned over to any one policy maker but require cooperation in policy making among many persons including the ordinary citizen himself in a democratic society.[43]

In fact, such big questions seldom get raised. They fall between the cracks of policy-making organizations. They are precluded by the ideological assumptions that are treated as settled fact by the policy organization, thus taking them out of the gunfire of criticism. Only a longer historical view helps in the interpretation of the emergence of such assumptions as issues of political controversy. That view identifies these recent developments as a *reemergence* of basic issues. It reveals that these issues were set aside from the center stage of political controversy in education for about fifty years of this century. They were set aside partly by the structure of federalism that subdivided the political drama among many political theaters. They were also subordinated to other issues through the sharp separation of educational governments from the mainstream of the American political order. Lastly, the historical view suggests that the reemergence of such issues implies an end to one political era and the beginning of another. It points to the strong political challenges to the doctrines of the old period as indicators of a revolution in the politics of education, a revolution that has implications for restructuring the governments of education.

Political Ideology: The Key

The tendency toward privatization eventually leads to increases in conflict. In education that tendency had depended heavily on public faith in the technical expertise of school professionals, which is to say that the political myth of authority in educational government, for most of this century, has been interdependent with the techniques of that service area. By technique, we mean a way of knowing, compactly applied to the world of objects including persons, that is primarily a way of control. This is the sense in which knowledge is power. But technique, while interdependent with man's political myths, is never a substitute for the myth. The tendency toward privatization in government is a tendency toward that impossible substitution. To follow an analogy used by the seventeenth century English political philosopher, James Harrington, in *Oceana*, it cuts the cake of power more and more in favor of those who have the technique. For as Brogan says:

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[43] Lindblom, *The Policy-Making Process*, p. 32.

> It is a dangerous and idle dream to think that the state can be ruled by philosophers turned kings or scientists turned commissars. For if philosophers become kings or scientists commissars, they become politicians and the powers given to the state are powers given to men who are rulers of states, men subject to all the limitations and temptations of their dangerous craft."[44]

The tendency toward privatization not only helps the advantaged but also further detaches their sphere of government from the rest of the political order. This drift leads to increased spread of conflict. The scope of conflict also expands because no system can remain isolated when the larger body politic is experiencing critical social changes. Privatization submerges basic value questions while social change raises them. In such situations even the best adjustment mechanisms may falter. Furthermore, as MacIver notes, it is especially true in privatized political systems that "established power is so tenacious of its prerogatives that rather than part with any of them it will often by blind resistance invite the loss of them all."[45] The research suggests both conditions. Empirical indicators of the revolutionary changes in educational politics may be seen in the bulk of the research on the politics of education reported in the last two decades as well as in the existence of that subfield of study itself.[46] The research notes an increase of all sorts of political conflicts in educational governments, state and local, urban and suburban. An even stronger indication of the significance of these conflicts is found in the increased politicization of educational issues in national, state, and municipal governments. In addition to changes in the political actors participating in the controversies, there are major changes in the issues at stake. Most of the important tenets of the municipal reform movement that terminated the political controversies at the turn of the century, having been the policy system assumptions of most of this century, are now increasingly under fire.

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[44] D. W. Brogan, "Preface," in Bertrand de Jouvenel, *Power: The Natural History of Its Growth*, trans. J. F. Huntington (New York: Viking Press, 1949), p. xvi.

[45] MacIver, *The Web of Government*, p. 287.

[46] Iannaccone and Cistone, *The Politics of Education.*

The central thesis of this chapter is that we are in the midst of a revolution in the politics of education that appears likely to lead to revolutionary change in the character of educational government itself. Precisely because the doctrines of that earlier reform have been visibly shattered in the last two decades, the necessary if not sufficient conditions for a restructuring of educational governments are present. The desertion of the intellectuals identified by Crane Brinton as a necessary precondition for revolution is present. Revolutions are first made in the minds of men. An unvarying forerunner of revolutions is not only the challenge to the ideology of a government but specifically an attack upon the belief in the authority of those who rule and upon the governmental structures in which they rule. Political ideology, especially authority, and institutions are challenged together because institutions do not treat all forms and issues of conflict impartially. As Schattschneider says, "All forms of political organization have a bias in favor of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and suppression of others because *organization is the mobilization of bias*."[47] As MacIver points out, "The guardians of the myth, no matter what its character, maintain focal agencies not only for the authoritative interpretations of its tenets but also for the authoritative control of those who reject or seek to evade its prescriptions."[48] Hence the ultimate political acts are the struggles over defining the public policy issues about which conflicts are fought and the structure of the institutions for channeling them.[49]

Schattschneider says, "The best way to manage conflict is before it starts."[50] Out of the incalculable number of potential conflicts in a modern society or community only a few become politically significant. Politics selects from the number of potential conflicts, placing some at center stage of public attention and subordinating others. In effect, conflicts compete with each other and people must choose among them. Indeed, "political conflicts are waged by coalitions of inferior interests held together by a dominant interest."[51] Because political cleavages around different issues are usually incompatible with each other, the development of one sort of issue is likely to suppress others. Further, the alignment of given persons or groups or organizations around one issue is likely to be different from the alignment around others. This is clearest when the usually passive audience enters the conflict. Thus the politics of issue selection or choice of conflicts influences the twin processes of unification and division—the ways in which people are brought together as well as the ways they are divided into political interests, associations, groups, and parties. As far back as the English Revolution of the seventeenth century, Harrington saw (in *Oceana*) the definition of alternatives and the choice of conflicts as the supreme instrument of power and the central issues of constitutional structure.

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[47] Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People*, p. 71.

[48] MacIver, *The Web of Government*, p. 42.

[49] Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People*, pp. 69-72.

[50] Ibid., p. 15.

Precisely because institutions are not impartial with respect to all conflicts and issues, because governmental organization too is the mobilization of bias, a fundamental change in the nature of the issues in the politics of education (or any other political realm) will place an intolerable stress upon the old structures that channel conflicts. Either they must be restructured or the new conflicts must be displaced by ones compatible with the old structures. Further, since the development of cleavages over issues is a prime instrument of power, the party that is able to define the issues is likely to take over the government.[52] This is why Schattschneider says, "The substitution of conflicts is the most devastating kind of political strategy," or, we may add, social happening.[53] In sum, we suggest that a condition of mutual dependence exists between the nature of the issues around which political conflicts revolve, the coalitions of political actors engaged in those conflicts, and the structural features of the governments that channel such conflicts. Further, changes in one or two of these elements will, unless reversed, result in changes in the others. The process may be initiated by the displacement of traditional central issues by new ones or ones previously peripheral to political conflicts. Again, as Schattschneider says, "the new conflict can become dominant only if the old is subordinated, or obscured, or forgotten, or loses its capacity to excite the contestants, or becomes irrelevant."[54] A substitution of issues based on a set of assumptions different from those that previously characterized the policy system is the surest way to transmute political conflict and turn existing political alignments inside out. It is also bound to threaten the system that channels conflicts. As Schattschneider points out, "In politics the most catastrophic force in the world is the power of irrelevance which transmutes one conflict into another and turns all existing alignments inside out."[55] The process may be initiated by changes in the composition of contesting coalitions occupying central positions in the organization of political conflicts, especially when these changes result from a major shift in role from that of customary spectators into that of political contestants. Above all, the privatized incremental policy system is in trouble when its assumptions, having removed from criticism beliefs that were later introduced into policy analysis as settled facts, are themselves under attack.

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[51] Ibid., p. 69.

[52] Ibid., p. 76.

[53] Ibid., p. 74.

[54] Ibid., p. 65.

A Change in the Politics of Education

The third research orientation inquires into the nature of change in the politics of education. Its focus is upon public controversies over the system for managing public controversy in education itself. To comprehend this approach some explanatory political theory is needed. Account also has to be taken of the historical drift, which reveals that the spread of conflict exists in a variety of governmental units and these upheavals appear to be converging during one time period. The strength of this approach is that it moves us toward asking the right questions. Its weakness is that its empirical bases are weak. The strongest research in the politics of education was directed only to part of the problem. The educational historians whose works bear on the issue were not sufficiently guided by political theory. The political theorists whose concepts are most useful in attacking these questions have been little concerned with American education. Nevertheless, a beginning can be made. The focus needed is upon the doctrines under attack, their meaning in determining the present administrative policy system, and the significance of the challenges to them and to the system. The ideological focus is fundamental to this third approach because, as pointed out earlier, such ideology introduced as settled fact is the chief guide to policy analysis and its incremental development. It follows that the erosion of such an ideology is the best early indicator of a revolution in politics that can lead to a revolution in government.

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[55] Ibid., p. 74.

Not accidentally, the problems that triggered the educational and political conflicts of the turn of the century, as well as those of the 1960s, are to be found in the cities. The 1890s saw a rapid increase in controversy. Joseph M. Rice's exposé of the schools in the 1890s shocked the people by its indictment of the lack of both quality and equality within the existing system. Previous formulas that balanced these issues were not working. Rice's analysis focused on problems resulting from the intervention of political machines in the schools and from the kind of individual who served on the multiple lay boards. His book was grist for the mill of reform ideology. The municipal reform movement was manned by financial and professional leaders including superintendents, who, as Hays has noted, "deplored the decentralized ward system in large part because it empowered members of the lower and lower-middle classes (many of whom were immigrants)."[56] Tyack makes the same point even more forcefully:

> Underlying much of the reform movement was an elitist assumption that prosperous, native born Protestant Anglo-Saxons were superior to other groups and thus should determine the curriculum and the allocation of jobs. It was the mission of schools to imbue children of the immigrants and the poor with uniformly WASP ideals.[57]

The municipal reform movement was not merely dreamed up. It was a response to basic social problems of the period. Callahan and Button, while describing the changing concepts of the chief school administrator as a reflection of the municipal reform movement of the early twentieth century, list a series of societal problems that placed schools under heavy stress during this period.[58] Among these conditions were the difficulties of the growing school population, often immigrant; the need for more schooling for educators because of the expanded high school; and the increasing financial needs in education. These changes occurred in a climate of suspicion about education and all government services, and it paralleled in time a developing tax-saving ideology. The preferred solutions of the politically moderate muckrakers to the problems they exposed was the application of modern business methods to public service. Within this context the mounting political conflict around education tended to center attention upon the fundamental tensions of the very warp and woof of education in America.

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[56] Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 55 (October 1964): 163.

[57] David B. Tyack, "Needed: The Reform of a Reform," in National School Boards Association, *New Dimensions of School Board Leadership* (Evanston, Ill.: National School Board Association, 1969), p. 35.

[58] Raymond E. Callahan and Warren H. Button, "Historical Change of the Role of the Man in the Organization," in *Behavioral Science and Educational Administration*, Sixty-third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, ed. Daniel E. Griffiths (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 73-92.

The conflicts reflect intrinsically unresolvable issues about the nature of public education in America. They are unresolvable in education because they are fundamental tensions inherent in American society. They appear most dramatically in the social order of large cities. One such tension is that between the idea of education for all children and the desire of each family to assure the best education for its own children. Given the reality of political and economic advantages of elites, this tension becomes a struggle between elite and egalitarian educational goals. A second struggle is that between the few and the many in government, which was seen by Aristotle and most political theorists as the underlying powder keg of all societies. In education this tension is reflected in the conflicts between administration and teachers within the professional system. Among laymen concerned with schools it surfaces in the political conflicts between the neighborhood clients of the schools and school district lay elites, who influence boards and central office staff. A third fundamental source of tension, which cuts across the other two, arises over the issue of the relative power of professionals and lay citizens over educational decisions. Any continuous pursuit of these conflicts to their logical end would destroy the political order. Some controversies cannot be openly addressed because the political order could not survive continued debate about them.

The substitution of conflicts, replacing the most fundamental issues with less basic ones, is one of the remarkable achievements of the municipal reform. That displacement produced a political myth that appeared to resolve the recurrent issues in education. Operationally they were resolved for an era, which is the best one can ask of a political formula that removed essentially unresolvable issues from public debate. Municipal reform doctrines have become the ideology underlying fundamental policy assumptions in education, and these tenets have been the basis of educational policy analysis for much of this century.

THE APOLITICAL POLITICAL MYTH

In education the municipal reform's political myth rests upon three major doctrinal tenets with their operational corollaries. All three had the manifest function of destroying the impact on education of the corruption of the urban political machine and the boss system. Their latent consequences played no small part in the renewed spread of political controversy over education in the 1960s. Briefly the three major tenets are: the separation of public service from politics, the view of the community as unitary, and the belief in the neutral competency of professionals. The last tenet is especially germane to the ideology of the professional administrator.

The separation of politics and education. The separation of politics and education was seen as necessary for order, efficiency, and effectiveness in the delivery of educational services. The belief in the apolitical nature of education is tenaciously held to this day by many school people as well as other citizens. Political mechanisms were developed to operationalize this ideology. Since the machine's power base appeared strongest in urban ethnic neighborhood politics, the reform sought to eliminate or at least suppress those neighborhoods. Mechanisms used to separate education and politics included the reduction of the size of boards, the separation of local school district elections from other local elections, and the development of local districts that were deliberately drawn with boundary lines not coterminous with other local governments. The most important governmental mechanism designed to cut the roots of the machine was the selection of school board members in nonpartisan, at-large, and districtwide elections. This mechanism disadvantaged the neighborhood political base of the machine. In effect, the central tenet of the apolitical nature of educational governance was used to keep the "wrong" people out of educational politics. It was relatively successful until the 1960s. The conflicts around educational governments were privatized, especially at the local level.

Fashionable as it was to argue the need for reform in order to clean up the corruption of ethnic and Catholic machines in the cities, the evidence reveals a bias that goes far beyond a desire for honesty in government. Abuse of power was the visible target. The invisible agenda was the transfer of power from one class to another. Cubberley's text in educational administration, a work that dominated the field in the early twentieth century, is an example of class prejudice as much as prejudice against the urban ethnics.

The original text, published in 1905 and reprinted in 1916, uses a map to illustrate the benefits of structural reform as advocated by the reformers.[59] The map is not of an eastern city overwhelmed by immigrants. Instead it appears more like a midwestern or far western town influenced by the radical agricultural groups or the western federation of miners. There are nine wards, in three of which the best people live (according to Cubberley). Three others are comprised of lower-class groups, one of which contains a black neighborhood of shanties, and three are swing districts. The implications of a government run by representatives from these wards were clear. Cubberley's advocacy of the system of at-large elections was designed to take advantage of the social inequality in neighborhoods as a political device to disenfranchise the poor.[60] Reformers organized coalitions and groups to restructure the system in such a manner that access to decision-making centers was convenient only for individuals and interest groups inclined toward reform ideology because of their social class ideological outlook and education.

Schattschneider pointed out that privatized political systems open up politics to interest groups. Schools now became more vulnerable to economic and social elites within the district. The political weakness of the school because of its dependency on a local taxation process encouraged the district's dependence on business elites with tax-saving interests. The deep-seated norm of separating education from politics made school districts less vulnerable to the political machine. It created a new vulnerability. Upper middle-class social and economic interest groups filled the void. Nonpartisan, at-large municipal and school district elections insured the middle-class and professional domination of educational decision making.[61] When Counts examined the composition of school boards in 1927, after the reform was well-established, it was clear that the middle class had won. Those who led the reform movement sat on the boards.[62]

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[59] Ellwood P. Cubberley, *Public School Administration: A Statement of the Fundamental Principles Underlying the Organization and Administration of Public Education* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1916), p. 95.

[60] Ibid., pp. 93-97.

[61] Robert H. Salisbury, "Schools and Politics in the Big City," in *The Politics of Education at the Local, State, and Federal Levels*, ed. Michael W. Kirst (Berkeley, Calif.: McCutchan Publishing Corp., 1970), pp. 17-33.

[62] George S. Counts, *The Social Composition of Boards of Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927).

The fundamental character of educational politics was changed in another way as well. The weakening of the neighborhood had implications for the influence of parent-clients on the service and for the importance of microlevel and building-level political issues that tended to get lost in the centralized at-large board structure.

The unitary community. The unitary community doctrine was a necessary element in the apologia for the power of the few. It is second only to the separation of politics and education in importance to the ideology of the reformers. It argued that there existed a single unitary community. A proper city manifests no social or economic cleavages, or at least none should be allowed to surface politically, since it would threaten the tranquility of this idealized unitary community. All special interests, according to this perception, ought to be subordinated to this single community interest. Good men residing in the best neighborhoods should be able, with guidance from the professionals, to govern the schools successfully. Controversies, especially those involving single schools, were considered as "special interest" situations and unwarranted intrusions. Nonuniform handling of on-site conditions was believed to be antithetical to the pursuit of city-wide interests. Implications of a unitary direction were obvious in terms of educational output. Programs were to be devised that applied to all children and the melting pot philosophy became the dominant thrust in the curriculum. The reformer's mandate was to implement an elite educational system for all. The needs and values of ethnic or class neighborhoods different from the dominant ones were ignored. Indeed, they were considered to be hostile to good education. A concomitant effect of the unitary community and melting pot doctrines was to provide ideological support for a macro-district political orientation. Such an orientation encourages boards to focus on educational means at the general level rather than concerning themselves with educational ends as they relate to the individual pupil.

Little attention was paid to the loss of power by the clients of education. Few reformers would have been comfortable in declaring the intervention of local groups in policy making as inappropriate, especially since they promoted their image as increasing participation in the decision-making process. They did develop a system, though, that favored the participation of one set of actors over another. The reform also shifted the political center of gravity from the neighborhood and the school building to the central office. Neighborhood participation was reduced, making it difficult for parents and local community members to influence decisions about educational outputs.

The micropolitics of the site became a kind of political wasteland, eventually occupied by managed PTAs and noneducational groups that appeared during episodic upheavals. A separation of politics from education, combined with the unitary community view as espoused by the prevailing ideology, destroyed the micropolitics of the neighborhood as it took power from the working classes and poor in order to empower the native, white, upper middle-class, and professional elites.

Administrative neutral competency. The reform needed a new administrative doctrine. Writing in the 1950s, Kaufman noted that institutions of American administration generally have been organized and operated to pursue successive value orientations.[63] The quest for Jacksonian representationalism dominated most of the nineteenth century. That administrative value orientation supported the spoils system of the urban political machine. The new administrative doctrine was founded in the belief that administrators operating as professional experts in their public service area, make decisions that are value free and apolitical.

The twentieth century saw the rise of professional managers. Reformers themselves were educated people who represented a growing technical-managerial class. Municipal reform focused on the city manager type of government as the ideal. This government was to be directed by a trained nonpartisan manager who met high standards of expertise.

Superintendents, who at the turn of the century were in contention with boards (often ward elected) for control of education, benefitted substantially from the reform movement. The belief in neutral competency favored professional influence over lay control. Professionals were now designated as the proper individuals to determine educational operations. As Callahan effectively documents, superintendents soon became extremely vocal advocates of this kind of professionalism.[64] Scientific management evolved as a buffer ideology against a variety of value systems. A scientific approach to problem solving assumed the validity of the results as long as the methodology was sound and the experts were qualified to interpret the data. Those who commanded technical knowledge under these circumstances controlled the system. Superintendents armored themselves with the technical expertise of the business manager and with the frame of reference of the time and motion study.

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[63] Herbert Kaufman, "Emerging Conflicts in the Doctrine of Public Administration," *American Political Science Review* 50 (December 1956): 1057-73.

[64] Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency.*

Clearly increasing reliance on expertise and professionalism also provided substantial support for the unitary city myth, the directions of its educational program, and the melting pot. It removed education from an arena with conflicting value systems and placed it in the realm of science. In doing so it changed the nature of the questions being asked. It further supported the separation of politics and education. A good school was the same for all and the expert was best able to determine what the nature of a good school is. Schools could and should be run independently of differing value systems, ethnic, or racial backgrounds. Issues discussed were technical, while questions of purpose were ignored. These consequences were inevitable, given the reformers' redistribution of power from neighborhood leadership to a coalition of upper middle-class board members and professional schoolmen, who were steeped in the ethos of neutral competency. An ideological commitment to professionalism in the operations of the service became a vehicle for the supremacy of the superintendent over lay boards.

By the 1920s the political revolution in education was in place. The present administrative policy system had been institutionalized by changes in governmental structures. Its political ideology was the basis for policy analysis. Its administrative handmaiden, scientific management, was effectively embedded in the training of school personnel, and the changes became a permanent part of educational governance.[65] Obviously it did not eliminate or suppress politics in education. What it did was substitute a different, nonparty, elite interest group politics for that which had existed. It resolved the issue of the many versus the few in the wielding of political influence in educational government. Power was in the hands of the upper middle-class few. The municipal reform determined that politics of the local educational authority would be about general district macroissues of finance rather than about building site microissues such as teaching and learning. Obviously the myth is not apolitical. The reform doctrine is a thoroughgoing apologia for power of the strong administrative state, especially in its belief in the neutral competence of the professional. Given the doctrine of neutral competency and the increased training of educators, it was inevitable that school administrators would acquire greater control over the policy system. The extension of the myth to its logical extreme was a major factor in producing a second revolutionary spread of political controversy in education in this century.

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[65] Ibid.

THE NEW EDUCATIONAL POLITICS

The roots of a new educational politics are in the ideology of municipal reform. Given the political function of that ideology to close off discussions about basic and unresolvable tensions of the American political order by displacing them with other controversies, their eventual resurgence was inevitable. Three events may be seen as critical in challenging the major reform doctrines. These events demanded that the reform tenets be carried to their logical ends. They are the Supreme Court desegregation decision of 1954, the aftermath of Sputnik in education (1957), and the New York City teachers' strike of 1960.

By deciding that separate is not equal, the Court took a position consistent with the unitary community view. Indeed, that decision carried the doctrine to its inevitable conclusion. The political conflicts that followed desegregation efforts have often found the supporters of that doctrine in opposition to its implications. The resulting ideological imbalance or cognitive dissonance, if continued, is likely to lead to the development of a new cognitive frame of reference. That would mean the demise of one of the crucial ideological tenets of the reform.

The post-Sputnik demand for quality education for all pupils further challenged the unitary community doctrine in its operational goal of an educational melting pot. The demand for more science and mathematics and for higher academic achievement may have produced its greatest effects in the stress it placed upon the system to standardize education. The consequent shift of policy evaluation to educational output considerations and the research evidence on continued inequality have challenged the belief in the system's capacity to deliver on its early reform promises. The combination of segregation and the dubious quality of outcome, especially for the poor, has cast serious doubt on whether the reform's promise of increased social equality through education is possible or even whether schools are designed for that purpose.

The 1960 strike and the continued growth of teacher organizations in conflict with administrators combines to react against the myth as it operationally developed, as well as to reaffirm it—but with a significant twist. The real outcome in power relations produced by the belief in neutral competency was the dominance of school administrators in the administrative policy systems of education. From one perspective, the developments in teacher organizations and collective bargaining are a reaction to the carrying out of the doctrine's logic for some fifty years. From another view, one ideological base of the teacher movement is consistent with the doctrine of neutral competency and its correlate of faith in technical expertise. The teacher groups are pitting their claim of instructional expertise against the administrative claim. The reform doctrines function as part of the apologia for teacher power.

During the 1960s the demand for community-based influence, the micro-political locus of educational politics, commanded attention. Its most strident cries were heard by then. The power of its appeal appears no less today. As noted earlier in this chapter, the community education demand goes beyond the educational governance issue. Its roots lie in the general political order.

These continuing controversies about education all challenge the tenets of the municipal reform. That challenge constitutes a persistent thread running throughout the increased political conflicts in and about education. These controversies are different in kind, not only in degree. Hence the answer to the question of whether or not this revolutionary era in educational politics will restructure educational government is to be found in developments not in education but in the larger political order.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered three views about politics and change in education that are based upon the existing research in the politics of education. If that research is used to understand and explain the routine workings of the administrative policy system in education it will answer questions about the nature and processes of incremental policy changes in educational services. If the findings and conclusions about periodic political adjustment within educational governments are the center of attention, the research answers questions concerned with the system's laws for managing political conflict. Finally, the focus upon how the ideological underpinnings of the system developed helps to answer questions about the meaning and significance of the increased spread of political controversies over education since 1960—the changing politics of education in America.

For the second time within a century we are experiencing a revolution in the politics of education. In both cases the origins of the revolution are to be found in the problems of the cities, problems that in both eras extend far beyond the spheres and competencies of education. The first of these revolutions restructured American educational government as the municipal reform took control of urban school systems away from city political machines and their neighborhood subunits. The second, which has been developing for some two decades, displays a similar propensity and potential for transforming the structures of educational government again. However, while major elements of the pattern of educational politics produced by the municipal reform, especially its doctrinal tenets, appear to have undergone erosion, it may be premature to announce the funeral. As Iannaccone and Cistone note:

> Two decades of effort in the area of race, equality, and curricular revision with more federal input than impact speak loudly enough for those who will listen. Schools today are more like schools of twenty years ago than they are like anything else.[66]

[66] Iannaccone and Cistone, *The Politics of Education*, p. 64.

Source: Laurence Iannaccone, "Three Views of Change in Educational Politics", in *The Politics of Education*, ed. Jay D. Scribner, Seventy-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. Reprinted with permission of the Society.

3

Educational governance: contradictions and tendencies

Peter J. Cistone and Laurence Iannaccone

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Morton Grodzins (1966), one of the pioneers in the study of American federalism, reasoned that democratic government, in the abstract at least, should be simple government. If not simple in process, it should be at least simple enough in structure to be easily comprehended. However, government in the United States, he observed, is not simple, either in structure or in process.

Grodzins' observation regarding American government in general applies as well to educational government in particular. Moreover, increasing turbulence in the current social and political environment of education is serving to accentuate certain contradictions and tendencies that are inherent in the system of educational governance. These have, in turn, become the focal points of controversy and conflict over the legitimacy and viability of the educational governance system itself.

This article addresses some of those contradictions and tendencies; namely, those that are inherent in the dominant ideology and in the formal structure of educational governance. To treat them in their full scope and complexity would require a much fuller discussion than is possible here. Thus, we shall present them only in broad outline.

Our discussion is presented within the contemporary context of a changing politics of education in America. We are witnessing a revolution in the politics of education, one that appears likely to lead to revolutionary change in the character of educational governance (Cistone and Iannaccone, 1979; Iannaccone, 1977; Iannaccone and Cistone, 1974). The historical doctrines of educational governance, born in the Reform Era early in this century, have weakened over the last twenty years under the stress of social change and political conflict. Both the ideology and the structure of educational governance are being challenged. Yet, they persist—patterns and traditions remarkably resistant to change. We now turn to the contradictions and tendencies inherent in the ideology and the formal structure of educational governance.

THE IDEOLOGY OF EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE

The dominant ideology behind contemporary educational governance was forged in the municipal reform movement early in this century. The movement, Waldo (1955) wrote, "sought to attain the values of equality and freedom for citizens by making government strong and efficient." It was not simply a change of regime that the reform movement sought to bring about, Banfield and Wilson (1963) explained, but "a change of constitution. It was not a difference of degree, but one of kind." The movement strove to eliminate corruption, increase efficiency, and make local government (at least in a sense) more democratic.

Furthermore, according to the Banfield and Wilson thesis, the reformers assumed that there existed an interest ("the public interest") that pertained to the city "as a whole" and that should prevail over competing, partial (and usually private) interests. Thus, local government entailed simply the businesslike management of essential public services. The task of determining the public interest was therefore a technical rather than a political one. It was necessary to put the public business entirely in the hands of the few who were best qualified by background, training, experience, and devotion to public service; they would decide policy and leave its execution to professional administrators. Interference in the management of public affairs, especially by private or other partial interests, was not to be condoned.

Since the turn of the century, these notions have formed the constituent elements in the dominant belief system regarding the essential nature and proper function of American government. That is, they have come to represent the myth system which, as MacIver (1965) asserts, is the complex of dominating thought forms that determines and sustains the political system. Moreover, it is the belief system that confers legitimacy on the governmental system and determines which issues are to be considered political in nature and which are not. "The guardians of the myth, no matter what its character," MacIver wrote, "maintain focal agencies not only for the authoritative interpretations of its tenets but also for the authoritative control of those who reject or seek to evade its prescriptions" (p. 32). Hence, the ultimate political acts are the struggles over defining the public policy issues about which conflicts are fought and the structures of the institutions for channeling them.

The ideology of educational governance is quintessentially a legacy of the reform movement. The core values of that ideology are (1) the separation of politics and education; (2) the unitary community; and (3) neutral competence and executive leadership (Iannacconne, 1977). All three had the manifest purpose of eliminating the corruption of the political machine and its impact on the educational system. Their latent consequences played no small part in the renewed political controversy that spread over education in the 1960s.

THE SEPARATION OF POLITICS AND EDUCATION

The separation of politics and education was seen as necessary for order, efficiency, and effectiveness, as well as equity in the delivery of educational services. It was held that education is and ought to be a unique, autonomous, and nonpolitical function of government, and that it should therefore have its own separate and autonomous geographic and administrative structures. This notion has enjoyed an extraordinary longevity and popularity and has tended to promote both the physical and philosophical isolation of public education. Commenting on the irony arising from this notion, Martin (1962: 89) wrote:

> Thus is the circle closed and paradox completed. Thus does the public school, heralded by its champions as the cornerstone of democracy, reject the political world in which democratic institutions operate. Thus is historical identification with local government accompanied by insistence on complete independence of any agency . . . of local government, lip service to general citizen activity attended by mortal fear of general politics, the logical and legitimate companion of citizen action.

There were both structural and functional manifestations of the "separation" notion. It was argued that education is primarily a local responsibility and that the control of education should therefore rest with local officials. Furthermore, because education is a unique governmental function, it must be separate from, and independent of, other municipal governments. In other words, not only should education be controlled at the local level, but within the local community schools should be protected from control or influence by other governmental officials.

Among the most important structural manifestations of the conceptual separation of politics and education was the system of choosing school board members through nonpartisan, at-large elections held separate from other elections. An expression of the reform ideal and of the middle-class, Anglo-Saxon Protestant ethos, this type of electoral system was intended to curb the political machine and put municipal government in honest and businesslike hands.

The reformers contended that school boards elected by wards in partisan (as distinct from nonpartisan) elections fostered factional policies and special interests at the expense of the school system as a whole. Ward representation resulted in highly politicized school boards sensitive to neighborhood pressures, particularly in the area of school building construction. Also, the ward system promoted logrolling among local interests over many components of the school program (Salisbury, 1967).

The principle of nonpartisanship is consistent with, and logically implies, the view that politics, rather than being a struggle among partial and private interests, is (or ought to be) a "disinterested" effort to determine what is best for the community as a whole (Banfield and Wilson, 1963). Officials, then, should be elected at large so that they will represent the community as a whole without regard to partisan preferences.

Of course, any electoral system confers advantages and disadvantages. In the case of school elections, the nonpartisan, at-large system, coupled with the separation of politics and education, served to ensure the political control of education by the middle class, principally professionals (Katz, 1971). While it made the school system less vulnerable to the political machine, it heightened its vulnerability to the social and economic elites within the community. When Counts (1927) examined the social composition of school boards at the close of the reform era, he found the middle class had become dominant. Nearly half a century later, studies (Cistone, 1974; Zeigler and Jennings, 1974) revealed that the middle-class dominance wrought by the reform measures early in the century had become a persistent and pervasive feature of educational governance.

The fundamental character of educational governance was changed in another way as well. The nonpartisan, at-large system sharply reduced the impact of ward and neighborhood sentiments and interests on educational governance. Consequently, the efficacy of parent-clients was diminished, and micro-level and building-level concerns were subordinated to broader, community-wide interests.

THE UNITARY COMMUNITY

Another core value of the reform ideology was that of the consensual, integrated, and organic community—the unitary community. In line with the ideology, a "proper" community should manifest no deep-seated social or economic cleavages. Groups and classes with opposing interests are inimical to the peace and tranquility of the polity. When they exist, as they did to an increasing degree in the industrial city at the turn of the century, it becomes necessary to adopt programs (such as universal education) and institutions (such as nonpartisan, at-large elections) to overcome the pernicious heterogeneity (Salisbury, 1967).

From the unitary community perspective the community is seen as an organic and undifferentiated whole with a single public interest. Accordingly, since there is no legitimate special interest, there is no need to differentiate educational programs and facilities to serve diverse subgroups in the community.

Educational programs were designed to foster social unity by blurring cultural distinctions—the melting pot effect. Class bias and cultural homogenization were the order of the day. The needs and values of the minority ethnic or class neighborhoods were ignored in favor of the standardization and administrative rationalization of programs and services. Such an orientation places emphasis on educational means at the general level rather than on school effects as they relate to the individual pupil.

Little attention was paid to the violation of parental prerogatives under this system or to the loss of power and influence of the clients of the educational system. One effect of the reform movement in this regard was to restrict meaningful participation in educational affairs to a narrow substratum of social and economic elites in the community. With popular participation and neighborhood involvement sharply curtailed, parents and local community leaders had little access to decision centers. That is, the center of political gravity had shifted from the neighborhood and school building to the central administrative offices of the school district. The micropolitics of the school building site thus became a kind of wasteland, eventually occupied by managed PTAs and noneducational groups that appeared during periodic crises.

This description of the unitary community, more or less accurate as it applied at the turn of the century and still serviceable regarding many small communities today, provides a more general than detailed picture of contemporary community life in America—in effect, a mythical image. However, the myth of the unitary community was and is important in justifying the separation of politics and education, in promoting universalism in educational programs and facilities, and in validating the control of public education by the middle class. As Katz (1971) observed, the basic structural and functional features of American education had been fixed by about the turn of the century and have not altered fundamentally since that time.

NEUTRAL COMPETENCE AND EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

The third core value of the reform ideology was that of neutral competence and executive leadership. The proponents of neutral competence sought to develop scientific methods for maximizing the efficiency of the public services. Leaving aside questions of values, since they were relegated to the sphere of politics and not that of administration, they emphasized the methods of scientific management and professional administration. In order to eliminate the fragmentation and dispersal of responsibility, control was to be concentrated in the hands of a responsible chief executive, ideally a professional administrator. Hence, the council-manager form of government has been favored by municipal reform groups since its inception in 1910.

Neutral competence and executive leadership found strong expression in school government and in the profession of educational administration. Professional expertise rested on the assumption that scientific ways and means existed to administer education, and these were independent of general community politics or the values of particular groups. A good school system is good for everyone, not just a portion of the community. This unitary community perspective, coupled with the separation of politics and education, strengthened the role of professionals in educational management, particularly school administrators. Since educational matters were essentially technical matters, lay persons were to defer to educational professionals who were qualified by specialized training to make the proper decisions. Better school management required centralization of power in the school superintendent, who also had considerable delegated authority from the school board. The school borard was seen as a corporate board rather than a political forum. The watchwords of reform in education became centralization, expertise, professionalization, nonpolitical control, and efficiency (Salisbury, 1967; Wirt and Kirst, 1972).

Among competing models of organization, bureaucracy triumphed. Bureaucratization was thorough and rapid because of the strong support of professional educators themselves and because they met little opposition to their efforts to develop bureaucratic systems. One reason was that in the beginning, as Katz (1971) documents, influential lay persons agreed with their goals inasmuch as bureaucracy represented "a crystallization of bourgeois social values," and often gave differential advantage to the children of the affluent. Complementing that fact, the years of the rapid rise of bureaucracy were also the years of withdrawal of lay interest in education, as well as the ascendancy of the school superintendency. As lay interest lessened, Katz wrote, the new class of professional educators consolidated the system as they saw fit.

Centralization, professionalization, and bureaucratization—in combination with the notion of the separation of politics and education and the perspective of the unitary community—ensured representation by the best (a lay aristocracy) and control by the brightest (a professional aristocracy). As a consequence, educational governance was divorced from the community it served, and lay persons had less power to influence policy. In turn, professional educators were able to augment their control of the governance system with little or no regard for the requirements of the community.

The reform movement did not eliminate or suppress politics in education; it transformed it. Politics persisted in the educational system, but it operated largely apart from the two-party structure. Its primary tendency was toward "privatizing" conflict (Schattschneider, 1975) and restricting the scope of conflict. Consequently, the politics of education has been the low visibility politics of informal agreement and consensus-building among educational interest groups. It is the politics of the sacred rather than the secular, and it confers special advantages on the insider (Iannaccone, 1967; Iannaccone and Lutz, 1970).

It is ironic that recent school reformers are advocating an ideology that is at sharp variance with that advanced by the reformers at the turn of the century. The chief thrust of recent reform, Cohen (1978: 430) argued, "has been political, not technical, and has concentrated on community control, education vouchers, and decentralization. The assumption is that increasing popular control over schools will make them more responsive to social needs and will improve their effectiveness." Thus, recent reformers are less certain than were their predecessors about the virtue of neutral competence and professional expertise. According to the recent reform view, "the problem and the solution [in the schools] are political: cumbersome and overgrown bureaucracy, self-seeking professionals, and manipulative elites are the problem; political redistribution—more direct control for citizens and families—is the remedy."

We are witnessing a revolution in the politics of education, one that appears likely to lead to revolutionary change in the character of educational governance. At the center of the turbulence is the increasing discrepancy between the ideology of educational governance, with all of its inherent contradictions and tendencies, and the reality of emergent forces and values that are hostile to that historic ideology. Nonetheless, its contradictions and tendencies notwithstanding, that ideology persists, remarkably resistant to change.

THE FORMAL STRUCTURE OF EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE

THE FEDERAL SYSTEM

The formal concept of federalism, involving the distinct division of powers and responsibilities among governmental jurisdictions, is historically inherent in the American system of educational governance (Iannaccone and Cistone, 1974). While the Constitution makes no mention of education, the Tenth Amendment reserves to the states and to the people those powers not expressly or implicitly conferred on the federal government.

Hence, education is a state function. Subject to constitutional limitations, the power of the state in education is plenary; the state may enact any statute or regulation not forbidden by fundamental law. The state delegates administrative powers in education to the local school district. As the legally controlling body at the local level, the school board is both a creature of the state and a local institution, acting in the interests of the local school district—whose public it represents—while implementing the mandates of the state.

The powers of the federal government in education derive from the "general welfare" clause of the Constitution, which has been interpreted by the Supreme Court as granting Congress the authority to tax and spend for broad social purposes, including, by implication, education. Moreover, the federal government may enter into agreements with the states for the mutual support of education and may exercise whatever controls are necessary to accomplish those purposes for which federal funds are appropriated.

The notion of a distinct division of powers and responsibilities among governmental levels tends to obscure the operational realities of educational governance. Unlike educational systems found in countries with a unitary form of government, the American system is one in which powers and responsibilities are shared among the three levels of government—the local school district, the state, and the federal government. Each of the three levels maintains autonomy in some areas of educational policy, but in practice these autonomous levels interact and have systems of mutual obligation and dependence (Kirst, 1976).

In Grodzins' (1966) terms, educational governance is functionally analogous to a marble cake of shared activities and services, even though it is formally structured (like a layer cake) in three planes. A little chaos, he contends, is built into the system. At one level, this chaos promotes sharing because it prevents any single government or governmental plane from gaining exclusive jurisdiction and power in any area of concern. At a second level, the chaos allows citizens to utilize multiple cracks (in the double sense of wallops from outside the system and fissures in the system itself) to achieve their ends. In a system of this kind, there are perpetual tensions and a perennial search for balance between the centers of power, a constant problem of dealing with squeak points in the system, and a continuing search for harmony between special interests and the general interest.

We refer here not to the constitutional and normative foundations of federalism, but to the operational realities of a cooperative and dynamic federal system. This emphasis draws attention to the contradictions between the operational realities of federalism on the one hand and the ideology and structure of educational governance that was the legacy of the reform movement on the other. Contrary to the notions of a dynamic federal system, the reform ideology stressed formal structure (the layer cake) rather than functional relationships; hierarchy and centralization rather than intergovernmental partnership and decentralization; unity and integration of political control rather than political compromise and accommodation.

In fact, the ideology and structure of reform have coexisted, through most of this century, with a dynamic federal system. The resulting tensions between the centralizing tendencies of the reform ethos and the decentralizing tendencies of a cooperative intergovernmental system color the character of educational governance today. The tendency toward decentralization has forced federal authorities to seek ways to develop national educational programs and services with minimal national requirements within the framework of a cooperative system, and has enabled states to secure federal assistance without fearing any real loss of their constitutional integrity. Moreover, local governments, public nongovernmental agencies, and private interests have acquired roles of their own as partners in the process (Elazar, 1965). Policy is simply not made at one level of educational government and implemented at another. Policy and implementation are the result of ongoing interactions among different, loosely coupled structures and interests, each with limited powers and divergent concerns.

DUAL SOVEREIGNTY IN EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE

The constitutional provisions merely set the stage for the protection of interests in the federal structure; but a series of laws, customs, and political institutions provide the bulwarks for those interests (Lineberry and Sharansky, 1971). This is particularly evident in two extralegal aspects of the interaction between state and local authority levels in educational governance. One is the degree to which a local school district is independent of state educational authority; the other is the division within the local school district between the school board/central office level (the macro level) and the principal/teacher/student level (micro level) of operation.

The concept of "dual sovereignty" (Iannaccone and Cistone, 1974) refers to the degree to which each level of educational government acts as a relatively autonomous entity with separate sources of legitimacy and authority; in particular, the degree to which the local school district is independent of state educational authority. As we discussed earlier, education is a state function and a local responsibility. The state claim to sovereignty rests on the legal constitutional reality; the local claim rests upon the belief of people, their perception of what the Constitution is, and their belief of what it should be. Neither the document nor the political beliefs are, apart from the other, the real Constitution. So long as people believe that the local board is their representative agency of government in education, and so long as they believe that education is a local matter, educational governance will reflect those beliefs and the "religion of localism" (Cistone, 1975, 1972). Moreover, the earliest elections for school board members actually predated those for state legislators and governors. Indeed, before there were any state constitutions, local school boards were at work organizing and monitoring the delivery of educational services in the local community.

The potency of dual sovereignty is also evident in the extent to which individual school building sites, structurally and politically, are only loosely coupled with the authority and control system of the school board and central administration. The school site is the basic unit of school administration and program development, the object of loyalty for students and parents, an expression of neighborhood identity and culture, and a center for social and recreational activity. Given these latent and manifest functions, in combination with the structural reinforcement rendered by various local advisory groups, the authority and control exercised by the school board and central administration over school site operations is tenuous at best, and in many respects is as problematic as the authority and control exercised by state authorities over local school districts.

Even with a strong centralizing ideology at work, the impact of state legislation and regulation on local school districts is highly circumscribed. The basic biases of an older federal system persist. In fact, given the limited but specific powers that are accorded to the various organizational structures in educational governance, those structures may either reinforce legislative intent or thwart it altogether. Legal-constitutional and hierarchical relationships aside, the structurally decoupled nature of the educational governance system and the multiple cracks and fissures within that system result in an ever-widening gap between state intent, as contained in legislation and regulation, and local implementation (in the delivery of educational services). This is most strongly evident as implementation is carried out by units most remote from state authority, such as the school building and the classroom.

The ideology of reform fostered the myth that a hierarchical cascade of political authority and control binds the various levels of educational governance together. Over the last decade or so, the notion of a hierarchical cascade has become increasingly untenable. As we indicated earlier, each of the three levels of educational government maintains autonomy in some areas of educational policy, but in practice these autonomous levels interact and follow a system of mutual obligation and dependence. Furthermore, the school building site has come to be recognized as yet another critical arena of educational governance. Consequently, state legislators, school district and site-level citizen and client groups, revitalized school boards, reorganized state departments and federal courts, the Congress, and the executive branch of state and federal governments have all shown clear determination to establish direct links to site-level operations.

Recent developments in the structure of educational governance have created contradictions that cannot be eliminated within the present system. On the one hand, the federal government, by virtue of establishing a new department of education, has reinforced the centralization of educational policy and administration. On the other hand, a number of states have mandated site-level councils to function as formal mechanisms for policy-making at the building level. Concurrently, state authorities are prescribing modes of collective bargaining that impinge on local control and local discretion. It is a case of structural schizophrenia, a condition that will likely result in severe stress on the system of educational governance.

A NOTE ON PRIVATE POWER

Finally, we note the movement in educational governance away from formal structures of democratic control toward private power. More and more often decisions about public education are being made outside the formal channels of public responsibility in local communities. In assessing private power and public responsibility in education, Cohen (1978) contends that the central political problem of American education is a simple paradox: "While formal governance arrangements vest nearly all authority and power in lcoal and state education agencies that are either elected or accountable to elected officials, power and authority have been gradually accumulating in the hands of people who are neither elected nor accountable to anyone who is" (p. 431). He argues that the political power of private and politically unaccountable agencies (for example, teachers' unions at the local level, and the Educational Testing Service and the College Entrance Examination Board at the national level) is at least as serious an obstacle to democratic control as the power of educational professionals and bureaucrats who are formally accountable. Hence, the reality of power in education is incongruent with the formal structure: Many important influences on educational decisions are either weakly accountable or not accountable at all.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Society, as we all know, is in ferment. In the literal fermentation process, ferments or enzymes act upon matter, change it, and transform it into a new substance that is more valuable than the original matter. It remains to be seen whether the ferments acting upon society's institutions will, in fact, change their makeup and transform them into new and improved entities. Nevertheless, we are experiencing momentous changes in population and demographic patterns, economic circumstances, environmental conditions, individual and social values, and the institutions and structures of government (Cistone, 1977).

For the second time within a century, we are experiencing a revolution in the politics of education, one that appears likely to lead to revolutionary change in the character of educational governance. Both the ideology and structue of educational governance are being challenged.

As we noted earlier, increasing turbulence in the current social and political environment of education is serving to accentuate certain contradictions and tendencies that are inherent in the system of educational governance. Within a placid environment, such contradictions and tendencies are handled through established conflict management routines that often lead to internally negotiated adjustments and incremental policy change. Within a turbulent environment, however, they may become a source of controversy and conflict of major proportions.

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4

Education, public confidence, and the legitimacy of the state: Do we have a crisis?

Hans N. Weiler

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Mr. Weiler suggests that the decline of public confidence in education reflects a pervasive erosion of confidence in all public institutions. But, he says, dissatisfaction with public education may even exacerbate the overall decline of confidence.

That public education has been facing, over the last decade or so, a loss of credibility, prestige, and public confidence is by now a common and widely reiterated observation.[1] The evidence of a consistent and significant decline seems incontrovertible, and it is rarely disputed. Observers of U.S. public education *do* disagree, however, on such things as the seriousness of the decline, its likely course in the future, its meaning, and its probable causes. In other words, does a "crisis" exist?

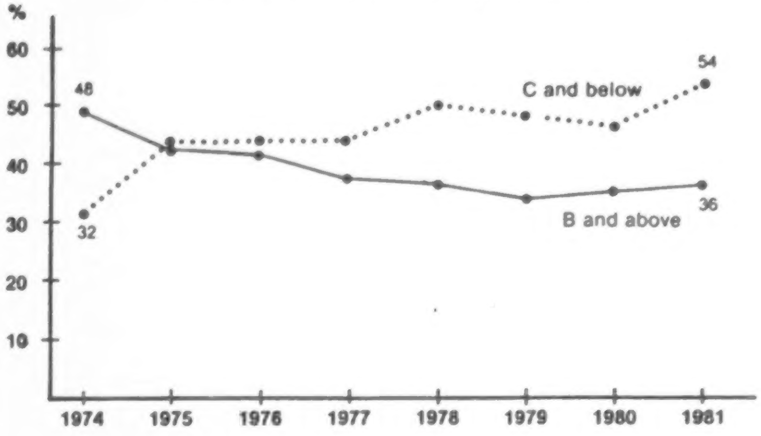
The answer is — to some extent — a matter of semantics. "Crisis" has a connotation of severity that requires us to use the word with caution. Those who care about the social health of the U.S. have reason to view with some concern the increasing disenchantment of the public with the public schools. But public disenchantment is not, in and of itself, a "crisis." People have a way of becoming dissatisfied with public policies. For example, public disenchantment with such things as housing, public transport, and medical care has been both relatively persistent and fairly intense. But such dissatisfaction hardly deserves the alarming label, "crisis."

I am arguing here that the problem is much more basic. A closer look at the evidence suggests that the decline of public confidence in education is a reflection of a much more encompassing and pervasive erosion of confidence in public authority and public institutions. This general erosion seems to have affected negatively the public's attitudes toward specific institutions, such as schools, that are sponsored and sustained by public authority.

For the past 14 years, the annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools has provided a fairly detailed picture of Americans' feelings about their schools. Each year since 1974, the Gallup organization has asked respondents to grade the schools on a scale from A through F. These annual ratings have fallen into a clear pattern (Figure 1). Aggregate "good" grades (A and B) surpassed aggregate "bad" grades (C through F) by 16 percentage points in 1974 (48% to 32%) — but the reverse was true in 1981, when bad grades outweighed good ones by 18 percentage points (54% to 36%). These data are subject to a number of qualifications,[2] but the overall picture is clear and striking: A key social institution has undergone, over a span of seven years (and probably longer), a massive reversal in the degree to which it is publicly respected and appreciated.

Other measures tend to confirm this pattern. The Gallup polls assessing public confidence in institutions, for instance,

Figure 1. Distribution of Aggregate Good (A-B) and Bad (C-F) Grades for Public Schools, 1974-1981



Sources: Stanley M. Elam, ed., *A Decade of Gallup Polls of Attitudes Toward Education, 1969-1978* (Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa, 1978); and reports on the 11th, 12th, and 13th annual Gallup Polls on the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools found in the *Phi Delta Kappan* (September 1979, pp. 33-45; September 1980, pp. 33-46; and September 1981, pp. 33-47).

have shown a consistent (but less dramatic) decline in the number of respondents who have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in education and an increase in the number who have "some," "very little," or no confidence (Figure 2). Meanwhile, data gathered by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) reflect a decline between 1973 and 1978 in the number of people who have "a great deal" of confidence in the leadership of public education (from 37% in 1973 to 28% in 1978). NORC data also disclose an increase (from 61% to 70%) in the number of those who have "only some" or "hardly any" confidence in educational leadership.[3] Further evidence of declining confidence in public education comes from California, where the Field organization has conducted its own surveys to assess public confidence in institutions (Table 1).

Of course, we would expect a decline of public confidence in public education to influence public behavior. And, indeed, it has. For example, the percentage of school bond issues approved annually by U.S. voters has declined considerably in the 20 years since 1957 (Figure 3). And data on attitudes toward tax increases to support the local schools confirm this pattern.[4]

To be sure, education remains relatively high on the list of social activities that Americans consider worthy of public funding.[5] Public support has declined more precipitously for some other areas of government expenditure (e.g., welfare) than for education.[6] But the fact remains that public support for the public school system appears to have eroded considerably over the last decade or more.

Does this erosion indicate a particular disillusionment with the quality of education or with the capacity of the schools to improve the quality of individual and collective life? Or is it possible that the erosion of public confidence in education reflects something broader and more diffuse — a new attitude toward public institutions generally?

Obviously, to account for the patterns that emerge from the pollsters' data and to determine what can be done to arouse renewed public support for education, we must explore more thoroughly the nature and the causes of the problem. Without such exploration, we cannot determine whether or not the decline in support for U.S. public education deserves the label, "crisis."

Table 1. Confidence in the California Public Schools

	1973	1975	1981
A lot	23%	15%	12%
Some	51%	45%	39%
Not much	25%	38%	47%
No opinion	1%	2%	2%
Confidence Index*	90	40	30

*Based on the ratio of positive to negative opinions (disregarding the "some" category).

Sources: *Current Opinion*, August 1975, p. 80; and *California Opinion Index*, October 1981, p. 4.

I have already suggested that the problems of public education are not unique to education. Rather, they reflect a broader problem that is endemic to modern societies: a general erosion of confidence in public authority. This erosion manifests itself both in growing cynicism toward the state and its agencies and in a progressive loss of confidence in public institutions that are sponsored by, supported by, authorized by, or otherwise identified with the state.[7]

There is nothing strikingly new about this observation, of course. Various indicators have shown for some time a persistent trend of declining confidence in the state and its institutions in this and other countries. On the level of theory, a major debate has developed regarding the credibility, governability, and legitimacy of the modern state. Some of the earlier phases of this debate centered in western Europe, including Jürgen Habermas's work on the "legitimacy crisis" of the modern state and the *Report on the Governability of Democracies*, prepared under the auspices of the Trilateral Commission.[8] But the debate has since extended throughout the industrialized world.

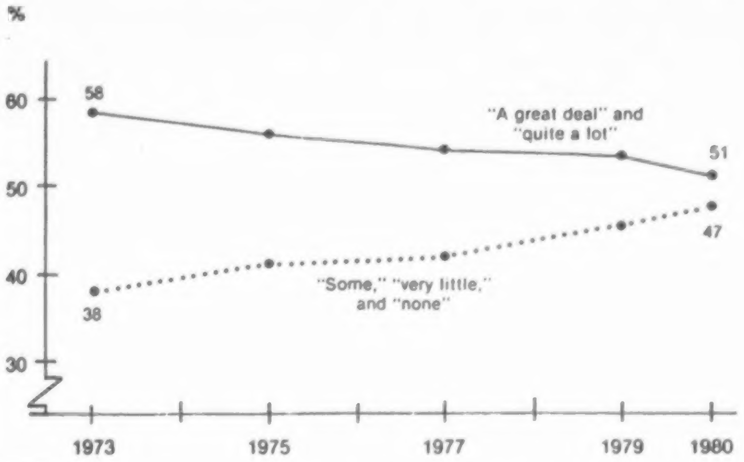
In North America, debate on the issue of legitimacy has been stimulated by Alan Wolfe's analysis of "the limits of legitimacy" and of the incompatibility between capitalism and democracy,[9] by several symposia,[10] and by James Freedman's observations on "crisis and legitimacy" in the administrative processes of U.S. government.[11] These sources vary in their premises and theoretical propositions, but they all share a basic concern with the nature of the authority of the modern state and the challenges faced by the exercise of that authority. Whether the analyses of the "crisis" focus on governmental overload,[12] on the decline and the shortcomings of existing modes of representation through parties and elected legislatures,[13] or on the contradictions inherent in modern capitalism and its relationship to the state,[14] all focus on a key symptom: the loss by the state of credibility and confidence among those whose continued support would enable it to steer a course between the equally hazardous extremes of disintegration and coercion.

It is instructive to look at some of the indicators of the level of trust and confidence in U.S. politics. Fortunately, the perseverance of public opinion researchers and a long-standing interest of political scientists in the question of "regime support" have provided us with a rather rich data base.[15] I will draw here primarily on data that have been compiled at the time of national elections by the Center for Political Studies (CPS) at the University of Michigan.[16] These data deal with "confidence" or "trust" in government and with their opposites, "cynicism" or "alienation."[17]

The principal finding from these data is stark and simple: Americans' trust in their government declined consistently and dramatically during the Sixties and Seventies (Figure 4). The percentage of people whom the CPS classifies as "trusting" declined from 58% in 1958 to 19% in 1978, while those considered "cynical" toward government increased from 11% to 52% over the same period — a complete reversal.

Data from CPS instruments that measure "external political efficacy" and

Figure 2. Confidence in the Public Schools, 1973-1980



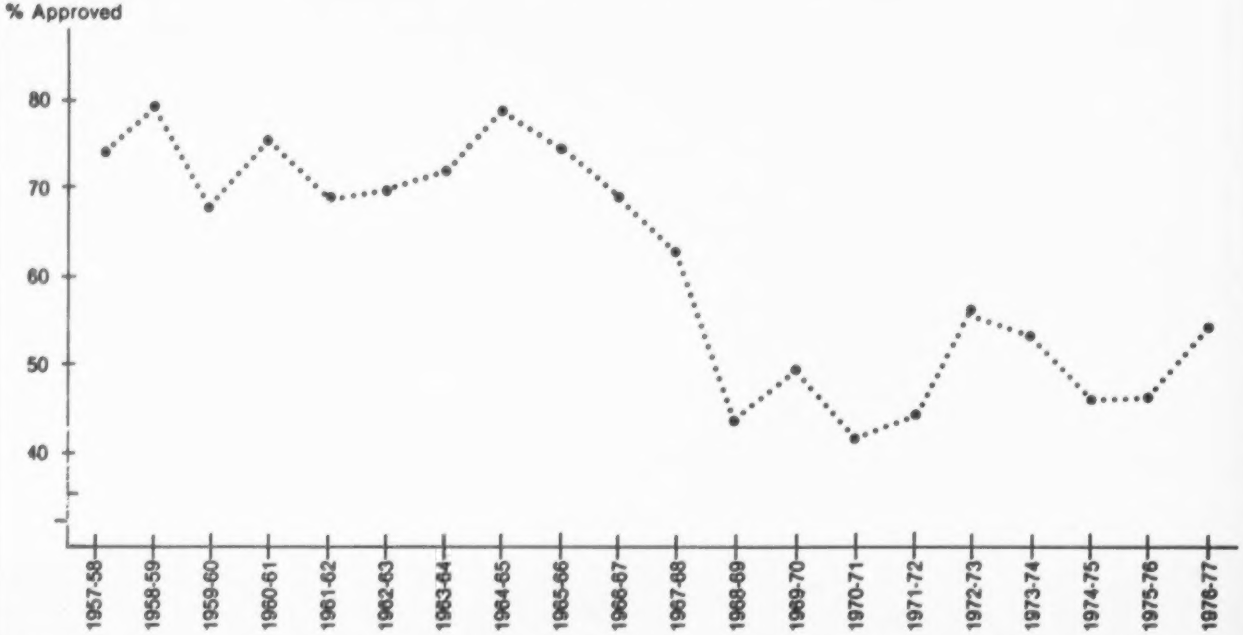
Sources: *Gallup Opinion Index*, Report No. 97 (July 1973), pp. 10-17; Report No. 140 (March 1977), pp. 14-24; Report No. 166 (May 1979), pp. 1-11; and Report No. 180 (August 1980), pp. 3-16.

"government responsiveness" tend to confirm this shift from confidence to cynicism.[18] Thus the decline of trust in government seems to reflect a more general trend in people's orientation toward the state and its institutions — one characterized not only by a conspicuous lack of confidence but also by serious and increasing doubts about whether the state is willing to or capable of adequately responding to the needs of society.

Meanwhile, just how much of a "crisis of confidence" this 20-year pattern of public opinion represents has generated considerable debate. The data make it difficult to find fault with Patrick Caddell's conclusion that the American people "are losing faith in the ability of our institutions or their leaders either to be responsive or to solve their problems" and that, "as of today, governmental institutions have so little credibility that it is impossible for many people to believe them on anything."[19] Everett Ladd, by contrast, tends toward understatement; he observes that Americans "are just about as dissatisfied as they should be" and that "they are not saying anything that is very alarming" or that could not be remedied by taking care of "spotty performance by leaders and central social institutions."[20]

Interestingly, in sharp contrast to their attitudes toward government, people's feelings of trust, confidence, and satisfaction at the personal and interpersonal levels show little if any decline over the years. The CPS "trust in people" index shows that the percentage of people who are least trustful rose slightly, from 21% in 1964 to 24% in 1976, while the most trustful group declined equally modestly, from 38% to 35%.[21] Similarly, people's assessments of their own ability to influence the course of political events, as measured by the CPS "internal political efficacy" index, remained remarkably steady (at a moderately negative level): The Percentage Difference Index level (i.e., the percentage difference between high and low scores) was −17 in 1952 and −16 in 1978.[22] In terms of "general satisfaction with life" — without any reference to the role of government — a variety of survey data concur in presenting a picture of only marginal changes, at least during the Seventies.[23]

Figure 3. Decline in Approval of Public School Bond Elections, 1957-58 to 1976-77 (Based on Dollar Value)



Source: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, annual reports on Bond Sales for Public School Purposes. Cited in W. Vance Grant and Leo J. Eiden, eds., *Digest of Education Statistics, 1980* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980).

Thus the U.S. public does not seem to be suffering from a general malaise. Instead, people's feelings of dissatisfaction and loss of confidence are focused on the state and its institutions. Their skepticism and disillusionment are specifically related to their perceptions of public authority. And this increased skepticism toward the state may explain the seeming loss of public confidence in education. Indeed, the most striking discovery in my review of various measures of public opinion is how closely the data on declining confidence in public education resemble the overall trend toward an increasingly cynical view of government institutions.

To be sure, survey data provide at best a limited view of reality. But where the evidence is so consistently unequivocal — and where the parallels between public confidence in education and public confidence in public authority are as striking as they appear to be in this case — we should take the matter seriously. This is especially true in this instance because a fairly strong argument supports and explains the empirical evidence.

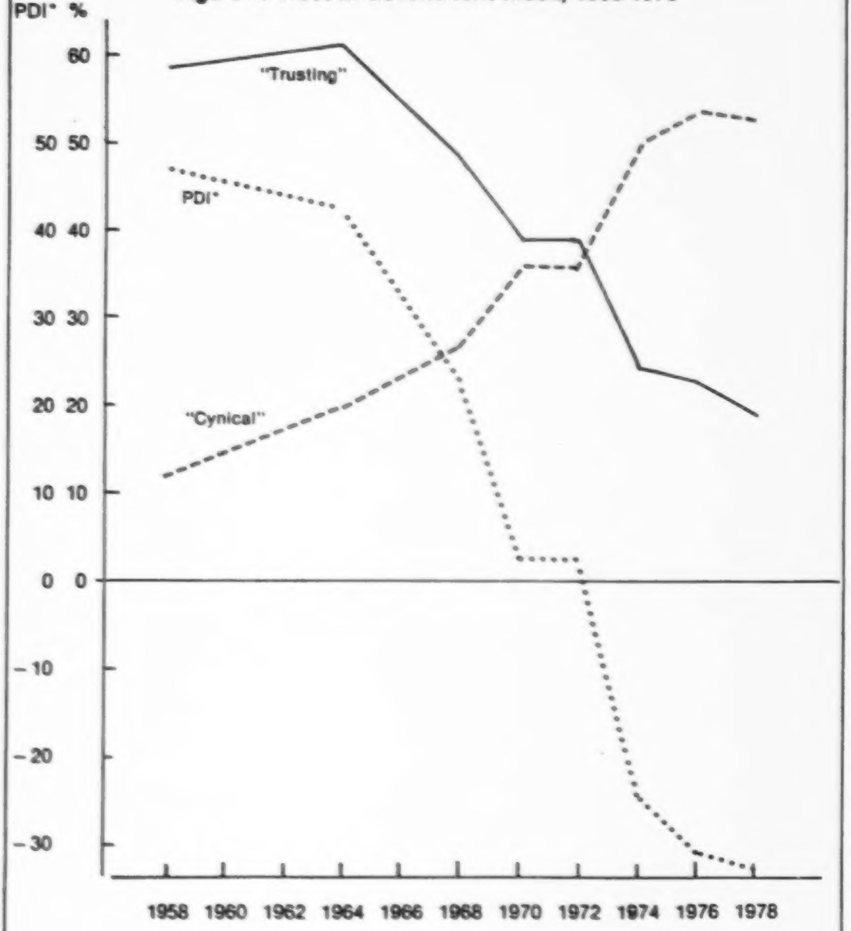
If, as some theoreticians suggest, the state is progressively losing its capacity to satisfy its citizens' expectations (both in terms of material benefits and in terms of moral leadership), or if the mechanisms of representation are becoming increasingly impermeable and sclerotic, or if an inherent contradiction actually exists between capitalist norms of production and accumulation and democratic norms of participation and equity, then it is not at all surprising that people's views of the state and its institutions are becoming progressively more cynical. And public education is a prime candidate to share in this more general disillusionment. After all, education is the primary mechanism not only for socializing the young but also for allocating social status and the rewards that accompany it. Thus it seems likely that the public sees the involvement of the state in sponsoring and sustaining public education as a particularly crucial and central function. In fact, Samuel Barnes and Max Kaase found that educational policy issues ranked at or near the top of the public's agenda in all five Western nations that they studied; education shared first place with crime control in the U.S., with a salience score of 4.1 on a five-point scale.[24]

Since the public is so concerned about the performance of the state in educating the young, public education is a particularly likely candidate for sharing those problems related to the credibility and legitimacy of the state. From this perspective, the similarity in the data on confidence in education and on confidence in government begins to make more sense. The parallels indicate that the problem is much more pervasive and encompassing than simple public dissatisfaction with a particular policy sector. And, if we are dealing with a wide-ranging problem, the notion of "crisis" may be more appropriate than it seemed on first inspection.

Let me pursue this line of thought another way. My argument suggests that the level of public confidence in a given institution should be a function of, among other things, how closely people identify the state with that institution. Data from polls that have assessed the public's confidence in particular institutions and their leadership over the past decade provide some clues for developing this notion further. Figure 5, which is drawn from the NORC General Social Surveys, shows a considerable decline of public confidence in some of the institutions most clearly affiliated with the state — notably Congress, the executive branch, and public education. But at the same time, my argument does not account for the similarly dramatic loss of public confidence in organized labor and television or for the remarkably steady level of public confidence in a clearly state-affiliated institution, the military.[25]

Thus far I have argued that the "crisis of confidence" in education and the "crisis of confidence" in the state are closely intertwined. There is, however, a further step in the argument that — to the extent it is sustainable — makes the phenomenon I am discussing an even more serious problem. This step is to suggest that dissatisfaction with public education does not merely reflect but may even exacerbate the decline of confidence in public authority.

Figure 4. Trust in Government Index, 1958-1978



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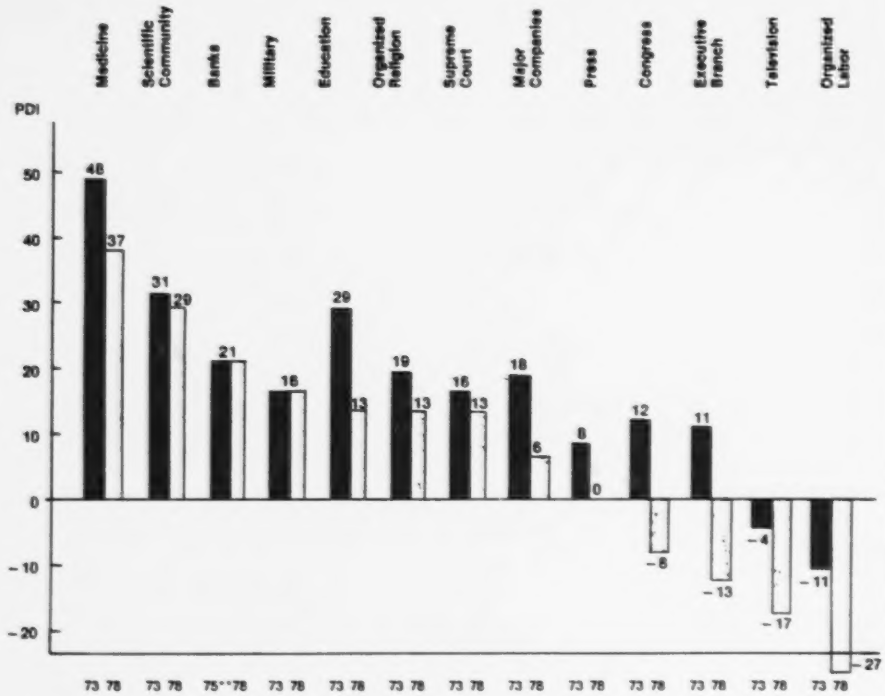
*Percentage Difference Index (PDI) is a summary statistic indicating the percentage difference between high and low scores. A negative PDI indicates a higher percentage of low scores.

Source: Warren E. Miller, Arthur H. Miller, and Edward J. Schneider, *American National Election Studies Data Sourcebook, 1952-1978* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980).

This argument derives in part from the work of Arthur Miller, who, in trying to shed light on the first phase of the decline in political trust (1964 to 1970), examined "the impact that reactions to political issues and public policy have on the formation of political cynicism."[26] From an analysis of eight different policy issues, Miller concluded that "the widespread discontent prevalent in the U.S. today arises, in part, out of dissatisfaction with the policy alternatives that have been of-

Figure 5. Confidence in Institutional Leadership, 1973 and 1978 (Percentage Difference Index*)



Source: *General Social Surveys, 1972-1978: Cumulative Codebook* (Chicago: National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago, 1978).
*Difference between percentage of respondents who have "a great deal" of confidence and percentage of respondents who have "hardly any" confidence. A negative PDI means that the latter percentage is higher.
**1973 data not available.

fered as solutions to contemporary problems." Miller's article generated lively discussion, but his hypothesis was not seriously challenged.

Entirely different data, gathered in 1972, have yielded strong positive correlations between individuals' assessments of the performance of government in a number of policy areas and their scores on an index of political alienation. These correlations remain statistically significant even when the variables of income and satisfaction with one's present standard of living are controlled.[27] Moreover, the correlation between alienation and dissatisfaction with the performance of government in education is, at .40, one of the highest — exceeded only by the correlations between alienation and dissatisfaction with the performance of government in employment, the war in Vietnam, and ecology.

These findings lend further credence to my suggestion that the decline in public satisfaction with the schools does more than merely reflect a generalized feeling of distrust in public authority. Rather, the decline in public satisfaction with the schools may be one of the leading contributors to sustaining — and even to exacerbating — the general "crisis of confidence" in the state.

In 1974 Miller suggested that "in a system as stable as that in the U.S. . . .it is difficult to conceive of the trend in trust continuing to decline at the same rate it has from 1964 to 1970."[28] But the inconceivable has happened: Confidence in government, after briefly leveling off between 1970 and 1972, has continued to drop just as precipitously since 1972 as it did before.

I have argued here that attitudes toward public education have been riding on the coattails of this decline. To be sure, people — especially parents — are bound to be concerned about declining Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, school vandalism, and other education-related factors that are usually cited to explain the decline of public confidence in the schools.[29] But my point is that, even if SAT scores rose and vandals started behaving themselves, the overall public assessment of public education would be very unlikely to improve appreciably. It is just not conceivable that, at a time when cynicism about public authority is at an all-time high (and, for all we know, still rising), an institution so central and so fundamentally political as education could bounce back to new heights — or even modest elevations — of public confidence and esteem.

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1. See, for example, Maxine Greene, "Choosing Our Future," *Educational Researcher*, February 1982, pp. 4-6; Michael W. Kirst, "Loss of Support for Public Secondary Schools: Some Causes and Solutions," *Daedalus*, Spring 1981, pp. 45-68; and Paul E. Peterson, "Federal Policy and American Education," paper prepared for the Twentieth Century Fund, Spring 1981.

2. These qualifications have to do with the different ratings given by different subsets of the sample, e.g., parents with/without children in school.

3. *General Social Surveys, 1972-1978: Cumulative Codebook* (Chicago: National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago, 1978).

4. George H. Gallup, "The 13th Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan*, September 1981, p. 37.

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Source: H. N. Weiler, 'Education, public confidence, and the legitimacy of the modern state: Do we have a crisis?', *Phi Delta Kappan*, vol. 64, no. 1, pp. 9–14.

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Annotated bibliography

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The insight of these authors into the issues of how power functions through inaction is particularly valuable. They argue that power is exercised often to prevent issues from being joined by political bodies and policy or decision makers. These are referred to as non-decisions operating like a covert veto thus stopping action without paying the price of overtly refusing or gainsaying some interests and values.

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Dahl reports research on the dispersed power of then current power pyramids in New Haven politics and the succession of governing regimes in that city for over a hundred years. His sequence of regimes and the values they represented is consistent with the theory of the critical-election cycle. This may be even more important because Dahl is not a critical-election theorist. The work is also insightful in its emphasis on the need for what Dahl terms a civil creed closely approximating this monograph's concept of a political paradigm.

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Everhart has brought together a number of authors from economics, history, politics, sociology, and anthropology, each of whom looks at modern education and its developments from an unusual, often radical, perspective. The authors range across the political spectrum from Left to Right. The common feature in their contributions is the tendency they have to lay bare the ideological slogans of twentieth-century education.

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